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THE SPHERE, AUGUST 29, 1942
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Vol. CLXX No. 2223 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC AUGUST 29 1942

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BRITISH LANDING CRAFT APPROACH THE FRENCH SHORE UNDER COVER OF A SMOKE-SCREEN : There was a good concentration of many different types of small craft ; the landing vessels seen here were hurrying at their best speed towards the beaches when the picture was taken

THE HARBOUR OF DIEPPE AS SEEN FROM ONE OF OUR LANDING CRAFT. Fires were burning in the port as the vessel approached. Parties of Commandos had actually struck the first blows before the coming of dawn on the morning of the 19th

A SCENE IN THE CHANNEL AS LIGHT NAVAL CRAFT COVERED THE LANDINGS ON THE DIEPPE COAST. Twenty minutes after the landing the naval bombardment of Dieppe began, in which naval units in the Channel played a vigorous part

DIEPPE, August 19, 1942

An Official Series of Photographs Taken During the Combined Operations Raid—the Largest yet Undertaken Against the Enemy on the Occupied Coast

—The part played in the Raid by the Special Commando Troops and by the Royal Navy

In preparation for the attack on the Dieppe area, a large military force was embarked on board naval vessels and transports ; this force assembled and negotiated a most hazardous sea passage and arrived off selected points of the French coast at 4.50 a.m. on the morning of the 19th.

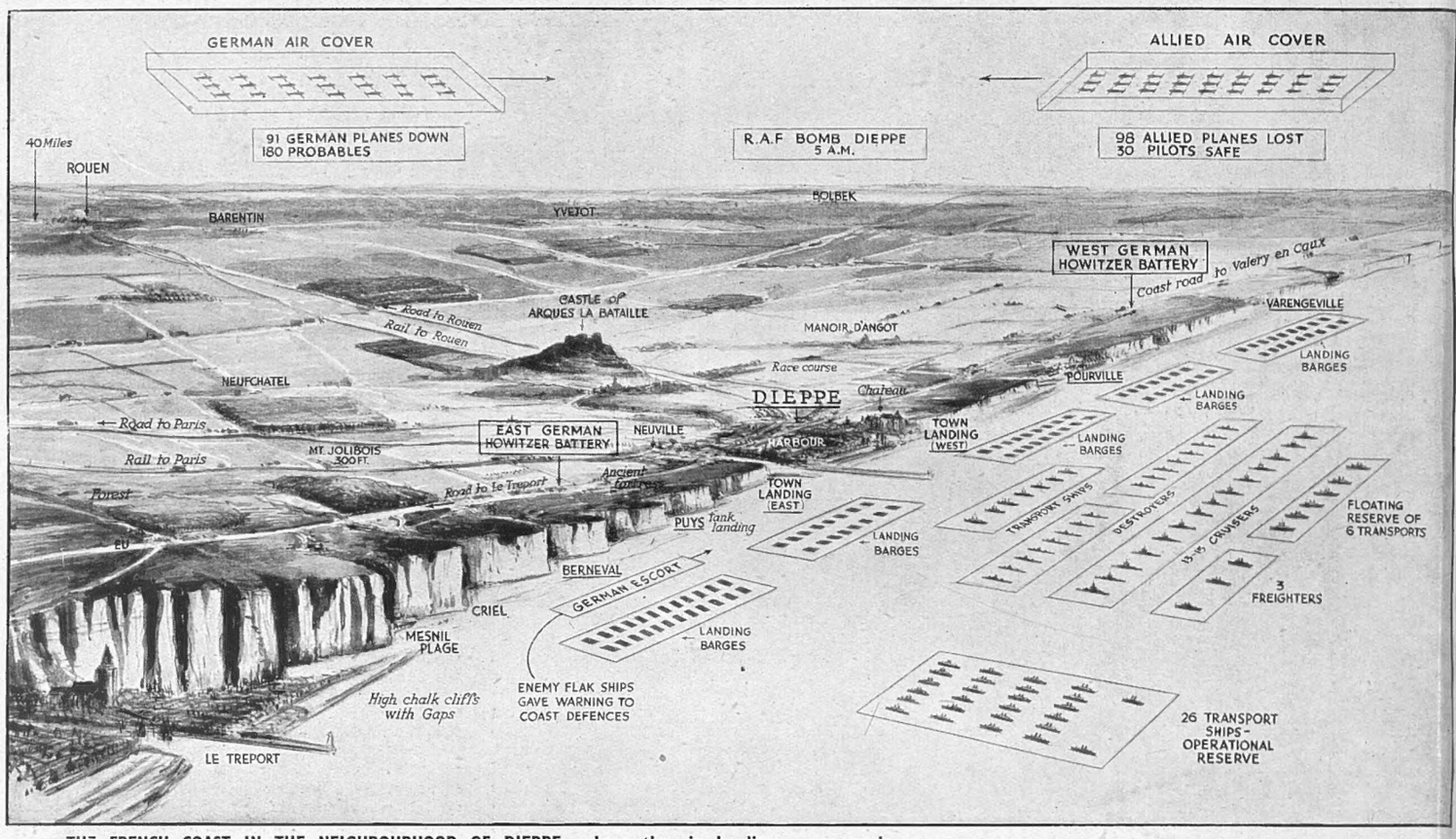
Troops were landed on all the six beaches selected at the time laid down. Aircraft covered these landings as arranged and then continued to cover the ships and men throughout the operation.

The raid had as its objectives :

The testing by an offensive on a larger scale than previously of the defences of what is known to be a heavily defended section of the coast ; the destruction of German batteries and of a radiolocation station which plays an important part in the German attacks on our Channel convoys ; the destruction of German military personnel and equipment and the taking of prisoners for interrogation. The raid was a reconnaissance in force, having a vital part in our agreed offensive policy.

It was known that as a consequence of our avowed aggressive policy the Germans had recently been heavily reinforcing the coastal defences of the whole of the occupied territory. Heavy opposition was therefore anticipated. In

(*Continued on following page*)

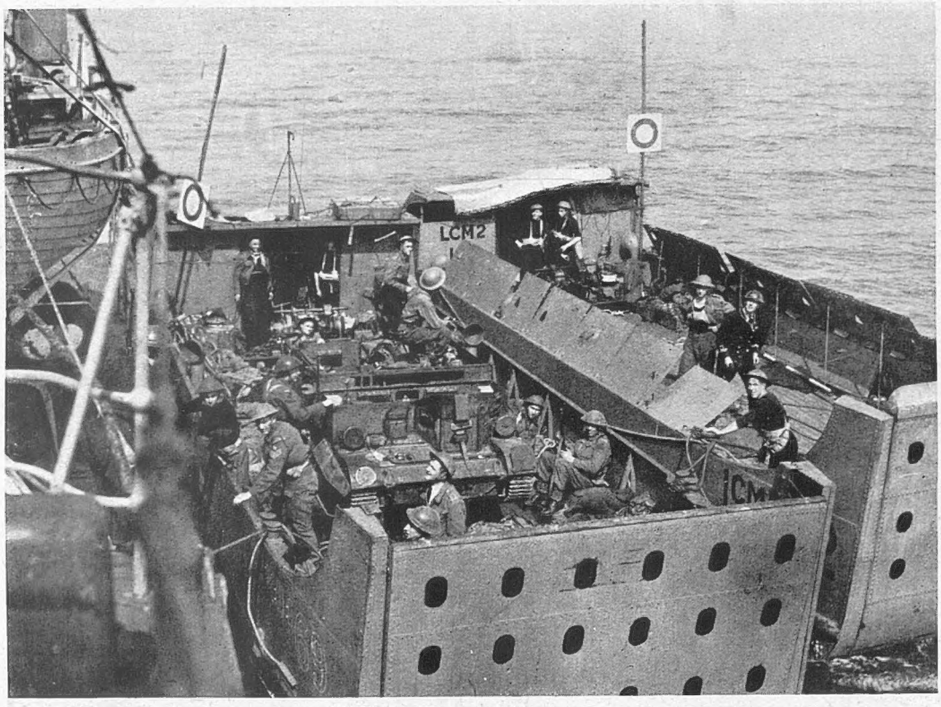


THE FRENCH COAST IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF DIEPPE, where the six landings were made—*Drawing by Percy Home (Based on British and German announcements)*

The combined assault on the Channel port of Dieppe on Wednesday morning of last week was made from the sea by six landing-parties in special barges, which conveyed tanks and infantry to the shore. The whole of the coastline here consists of high chalk cliffs, with breaks at intervals where small streams find their way to the sea. At most of these there are little seaside resorts with villas and hotels on cliff-top and on beach. This was so at all the landing-points, with the exception of Varengeville, where leafy glades descend from an upper village.

There were two main objectives in the assault : the East and West German howitzer batteries, which commanded the water approaches to Dieppe. The approximate positions of these are shown in the above drawing. The attack on the Western battery was successfully made by way of the Pourville and Varengeville gaps, the battery and its whole equipment being destroyed. The attack on the Eastern battery was not so successful, owing to the ill luck of an encounter with a German convoy escort ; barges were attacked, and warning was given to the defenders, who thus had time to bring such a combined fire that landings became impossible at certain points. Tanks were, however, landed at Puys, and these worked their way round the cliffs into the outskirts of the town. Here a body of Canadians in the streets were surrounded by the enemy and were unable to get away ; but another party were able to capture and hold the Racecourse. How far the tanks were able to penetrate is as yet uncertain : the roads out of Dieppe lead direct towards Rouen, some 36 miles away, passing the old castle of Arques on its isolated hill.

The positions of the landings are given in the above drawing in accordance with the British official narratives ; the disposition of the transports and supporting naval vessels, however, are from details given in the German *communiqués* : these are not, at the time of writing, supported by the announcements from the Admiralty



TWO OF THE LANDING-CRAFT—one containing a Bren-gun carrier—come alongside a destroyer after returning from the beaches

MAJOR J. BEGG, OF CALGARY, who led the Canadian tank crews

(*Continued from preceding page*)

fact, it became clear during the raid that the enemy had brought additional troops and guns to the Dieppe area quite recently.

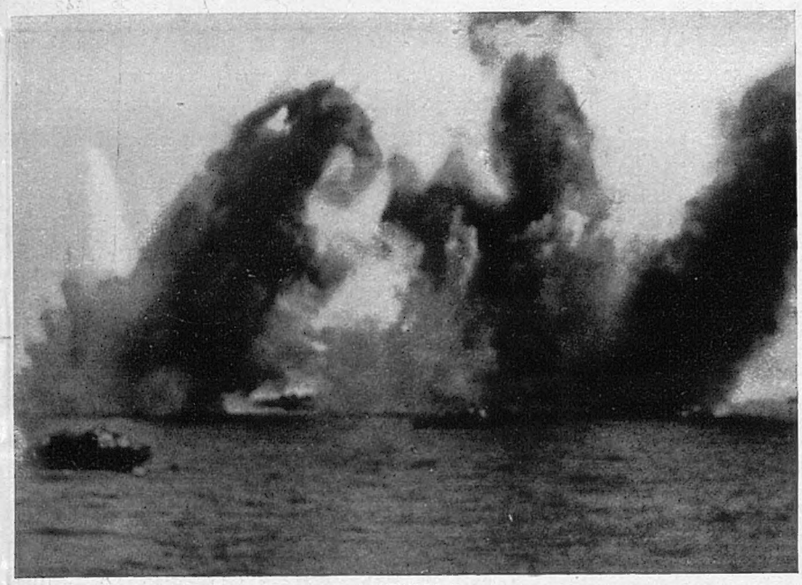
Despite this heavy opposition, forces were landed on all the beaches, together with some tanks. They succeeded in destroying two batteries and the radiolocation station, inflicting heavy casualties upon the enemy forces, in sinking two small vessels, and in bringing back a number of prisoners. Our troops, the majority of whom were Canadians, remained ashore for nearly nine hours from dawn, and were then re-embarked in the naval vessels which throughout this period were lying close off the French coast, assisting our landing-forces by a heavy bombardment. The tanks which had been landed, and some of which succeeded in breaking into the town, were ordered to be blown up and destroyed before our troops re-embarked.

Throughout the landing, extensive air cover for both ships and landing-forces was provided. While the principal objective of the air operations was to give support to the landing and cover to the forces during the land engagement, and to the naval craft, there in fact developed one of the greatest air battles of the war.

HE WAS WOUNDED DURING THE BIG RAID : A scene on the quayside as the Commandos arrived back in England

Although this air battle had not been planned as one of the objectives of the operation, the Germans were forced to call up aircraft reinforcements from all parts of Occupied France, Holland and Belgium. Many of these enemy aircraft were engaged before they ever reached the area of the operations, large formations being broken up and dispersed, particularly over the mouth of the Somme.

Throughout the operation the naval forces were under heavy air attack and land-artillery bombardment. Despite this heavy attack our only naval losses were a fairly large number of landing-craft, which was to be expected in an operation of this nature, and one destroyer, H.M.S. *Berkeley*, which was so seriously damaged that she had to be sunk by our own forces. Naval craft did not leave the French coast until it was known that every possible man had been taken off



THE ENEMY ATTEMPTED TO STOP THE LANDINGS by coast-gun barrages and dive-bombing: And this was the scene outside the harbour at Dieppe

MEN OF THE COMBINED OPERATIONS FORCE walking ashore with their arms, after their return to a British port after the Dieppe raid

MANY HUNDREDS OF CUPS OF TEA were dispensed to the troops as soon as they returned to England

WOUNDED MEN CLIMBING ON BOARD A DESTROYER whilst the action was still taking place on shore. Note the varied assortment of arms on this special landing-craft

SOME REALLY TOUGH SOLDIERS: Note the disposition of the clips of cartridges in the belt of this man

HOW THE PRISONERS WERE BROUGHT BACK—blindfolded and guarded by men with Tommy guns. A number of German officers and men were captured during the operations

GERMANY'S SELF-CONFERRED TROJAN HORSE . . .

"Every Fourth Worker in the Reich Will Soon be a Foreigner"—Because Germany's Crying Need (as in the Last War) is for More and Still More Soldiers. How the System of Recruitment Works, and How the Millions of Foreign Workers Resent This Forced Labour, is Described Below

By FERDINAND TUOHY

THERE can be no doubt that Hitler counted on a novel use of prisoners of war and of forced foreign labour when he mapped out the conquest of Europe before this war, his idea being that such human imports should as far as possible keep the German war machine going at full tilt within the Reich, filling the places of German workers absent with the armies. But in his grandiose planning the Führer did not count on two things that have come to pass: the war is lasting so long that he stands in need of much more imported foreign labour than ever he bargained for, and all his cunning blandishments have failed to stir his overrun victims, who provide the labour in Germany, from feelings of hatred as deep as any recorded in history.

Yet the man-power position of the Reich threatens to become so acute as 80,000,000 Germans try to hold under 470,000,000 remaining Europeans—to say nothing of some of those 80,000,000 Germans—that the Nazis *must* risk bringing ever more foreigners inside the Reich, mostly from the conquered countries.

As the flies conquer the flypaper, in the phrasing of John Steinbeck, as the German Army spreads 1,200 miles from its bases, away into the Caucasus, the gigantic job of keeping 300 divisions in the field and of policing a behind-the-lines area extending from North Cape to Crete and Biarritz almost to Astrakhan, is a business which absorbs the manhood of the Master Race to such an extent that even Hitler cannot be so sure now. Hasn't he got the lesson of Ludendorff to go by? Doesn't he well know that Germany's being beaten on the home front last time was just a yarn, and that she really crumpled from lack of reserves?

So the German round-up of hostile foreign workers must go on. Hitler has rarely seemed more intense about anything, so it may be deduced that he considers the enrolment (it is nearer to press-gang work) vital to victory. Says the *Frankfurter Zeitung*: "At present roughly every fifth worker in Germany is a foreigner. Soon every fourth worker in the Reich will be a foreigner." This is a reference to the drive now going forward under Dr. Eichenfurther, of the German Office of Statistics, by which it is hoped that shortly there will be 6,000,000 foreign workers in Germany, which will include working prisoners of war. The present aggregate of 5,000,000 is composed approximately of 2,400,000 prisoners of war and 2,600,000 imported labour. For the latter, the following are rough figures only, open to correction:

1,000,000 Poles.	180,000 French.
450,000 Balkans.	150,000 Scandinavians and Balts.
300,000 Italians	100,000 Dutch.
220,000 Belgians.	
200,000 Czechs.	

Eichenfurther is currently angling for Spaniards, more French, and for Italians, Hungarians and Rumanians, "allies" who can fill the factories and release Germans to do the fighting.

In order to grasp the full position it is advisable to consider the prisoners-of-war workers separately and even to divide these into two categories: Western and Russo-Polish-Balkan. Western prisoners of war are not coerced, and are paid, fed and housed according to rules which the International Red Cross surveys in operation. Most of the captives have been subjected to intensive Nazi propaganda, but there are no grounds for believing that other than a very few have really altered their opinions. They work mainly in order to dodge boredom, but also to earn extra money for the canteen. It is computed that 600,000 French prisoners are working out of 1,300,000, and British prisoners follow suit, though in what proportion is not known. The work is chiefly agricultural, roads, railways and general repairs. But it is a very different state of affairs with the great number of Russian, Polish and Balkan prisoners, who are treated more or less as slave labour and go to swell sensibly the total of 2,400,000 prisoners at work inside Germany. The Russians are deemed too unsafe for introduction into the Reich, save for a restricted number, duly "vetted," who are to be found on the railways and in the Ruhr mine-fields.

Coming now to the imported foreign workers, these are embittered and hostile from the start—and no wonder, in view of the means employed to bring them to Germany. From Russia, Poland and the Balkans, the Germans just round up all of the male and female population between the ages of fourteen and fifty-five that they require. They are forcibly deported to Germany. If the Nazis are more circumspect in dealing with labour from Western and Northern Europe, using chiefly economic pressure, the effect is hateful all the same. As an illustration, take what is happening with Denmark's cement factories. The Germans are withholding coal and the intention is clear. They want to compel the factories to close so that an increasing number of unemployed will have to go to Germany to work in German war industry. In similar manner, French, Belgian and Dutch workers are forced into unemployment by wholesale closing of factories, as a result of which the alternatives facing former workers are starvation or going to the Reich.

As was only to be expected, the lowest behaviour among the quislings is Laval's. He aims at closing no fewer than 1,300 factories throughout France, so that Hitler shall get the 300,000 French workers he asks for, and which must include one-half skilled labour. If unemployed Frenchmen refuse to go to Germany, Laval threatens to withdraw their dole, insurance and even their ration-cards. And he sinks to his lowest by playing on the anguished longing of Frenchwomen to have their men prisoners back from Germany after more than two years. Laval says that Hitler will release one prisoner for every three skilled French workers accepting employment in the Reich. What he does not add is that twelve unskilled French workers must go to Germany in return for the release of one prisoner. So that if Frenchwomen are to see 50,000 of their menfolk back from German prison camps, no fewer than 600,000 French unskilled workers or 150,000 skilled workers, of whom there is a limited quantity, must go to work in Germany for Hitler's war machine.

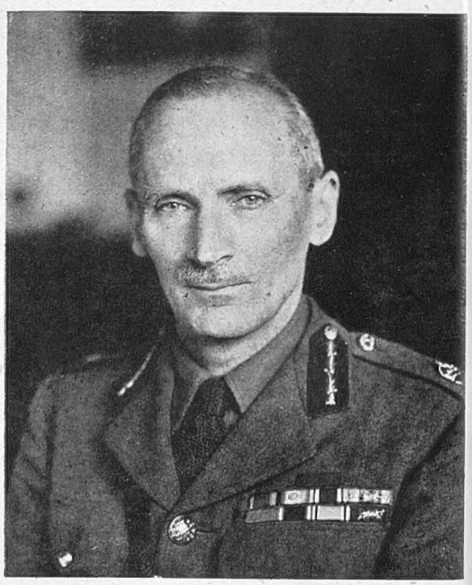
The Times, I see, thinks that Germany "has led a Trojan horse into her own gates, and there it will be awaiting the future. A few million defrauded men will be unwelcome guests when home security becomes a paramount problem for a tottering Naxi Administration." Six million hostile foreigners fit enough to work can assuredly be relied upon to constitute "some" Trojan horse when the Nazi edifice begins to crack. In the meantime, however, Hitler hopes to win by maintaining German man-power at the front as a direct consequence of this forced foreign labour in German war factories and on the land. The reason he is clamouring specially for skilled labour is that he cannot hope to send back skilled Germans from the armies to the factories this winter, as he did last, and so he must import foreigners to fill the gap. This accounts for one-half of all French who have recently gone to Germany (17,000 a month on average) belonging to skilled metallurgy. The very latest is that "large factories will be transferred, with their entire technical staffs and equipment, foremen, engineers and directors, to take part in the war effort in the Reich."

News of this kind substantiates the belief that the Trojan horse may be used to some purpose very soon. Report tells that among foreign workers going to Germany are to be found men briefed in sabotage, in "go-slow" tricks, in contacting and forming factory cells with German workers, and in sending back information. According to a recent exhibition I visited in Regent Street, more than 200,000 German Socialists, Communists and Catholics are operating within the Reich as an underground army, and presumably it is with these elements that the actively-hostile importees will try to consort. *Try* because, of course, the importees are watched minutely by the Gestapo and by stool pigeons recruited from their own ranks. One cannot expect great shakes in such circumstances. At the same time, as Allied bombing of Germany widens and grows, at least some of the astronomical number of leaflets dropped from our bombers on the Continent might be directed to patting the Trojan horse, to encouraging him and to appreciation of his potential worth.

At the best the foreign workers in Germany, 6,000,000 of them, including 500,000 women, chiefly Polish, are well sited as the advance guard of the armies of liberation, and meanwhile they may succeed to some extent in putting the brake on Hitler's war output by familiar methods whilst at work, and by proselytising among the German workmen. But there is another side which must not be lost to view where a person like Hitler is concerned. Having got these 6,000,000 foreigners into his web, Hitler will use all the blackmail pressure he can think of, if and when he is forced to the wall. That is one reason why Himmler has vastly augmented the Waffen S.S., part of whose mission it would be to take grim measures against Germany's foreign workers if a certain line and limit drawn by Hitler should be ignored by the Allies. I have even heard it predicted that the Nazis will not forbear to massacre should the liberated populations of the occupied countries pass to retributive action against Germans.

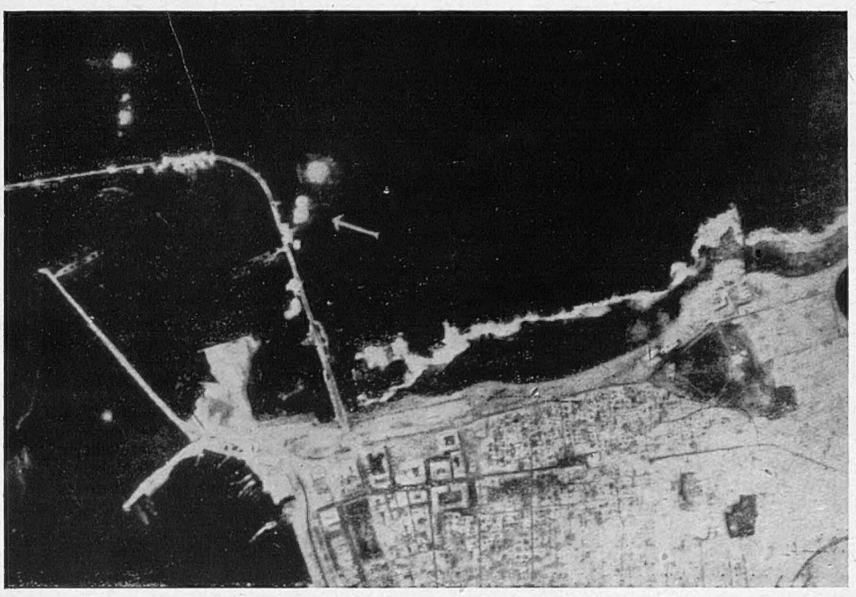
MAJOR-GENERAL H. LUMSDEN, to command the 30th Corps in Egypt, is forty-five years of age and a tank expert. He formerly commanded the 12th Lancers in a series of bitter rearguard actions in Belgium just before Dunkirk, when he won the D.S.O. He commanded an Armoured Division in the recent fighting in Egypt and was wounded at El Alamein

THE NEW C.-IN-C., MIDDLE EAST—General the Hon. Sir Harold Alexander, fifty years of age, who was in command of the evacuation from Dunkirk; more recently, he brought the British Army out of Burma

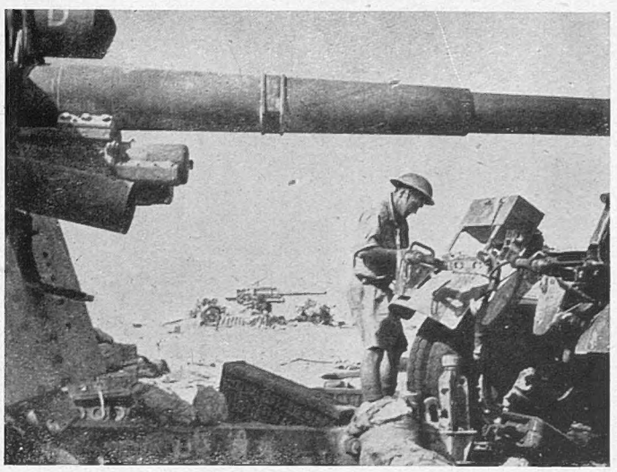


LIEUT.-GENERAL B. L. MONTGOMERY, the new Commander of the 8th Army, is fifty-four: he was G.O.C. of the South-Eastern Command, the training of which he organised on Spartan lines. He is a non-smoker and a teetotaller, and is known for his devotion to the most rigorous ideas in training and as an aggressive type of soldier

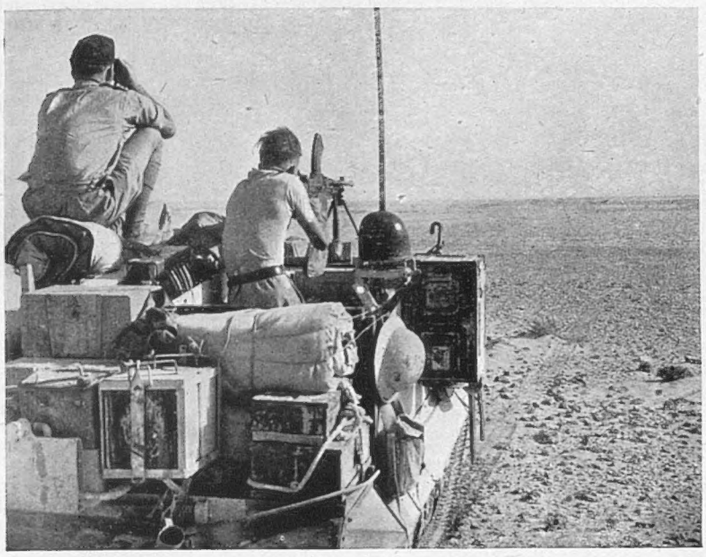
ON THE EGYPTIAN FRONT



THE R.A.F. "MAIL RUN" TO BENGHAZI: The daily load of bombs being delivered. The harbour at Benghazi is so frequently bombed that the pilots have named sorties to this target the "Mail Run." This is the celebrated "Cathedral Mole" (so well known owing to its frequent mention in communiqués): bombs are seen exploding on and near it



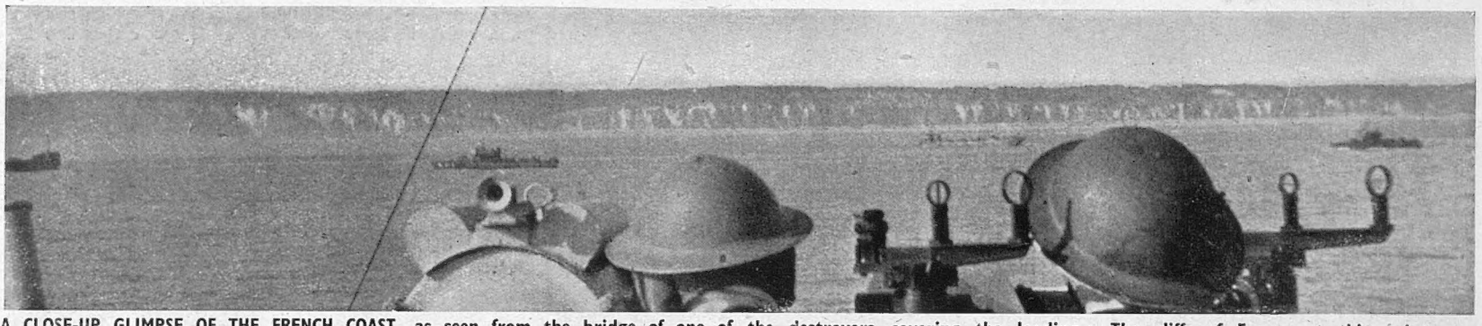
"SPIKING" ENEMY GUNS AT EL ALAMEIN: Captured enemy equipment being demolished by New Zealand Sappers. These guns are of no use to the Allied Forces, so they are destroyed



A BRITISH BREN GUN IN ACTION, on its Carrier, to the south of El Alamein. This picture well exemplifies the flat nature of the ground and the absence of cover in this sector of the front

BRITISH BIG GUNS REPAIRED IN THE WESTERN DESERT: As far as possible, the artillery sees that its guns are repaired on the spot. Here personnel of a Light Aid Detachment are seen busy at repair work on a 4·5 gun

THE "GENERAL GRANTS" MOVE UP: These tanks belong to the 22nd Armoured Brigade: they are moving up to the front line in column, to the south of El Alamein. As they thunder forward, a dense cloud of dust rises over the desert



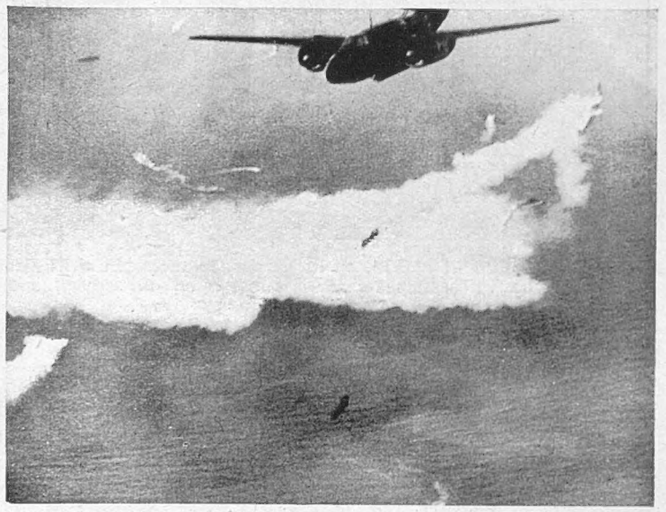
A CLOSE-UP GLIMPSE OF THE FRENCH COAST, as seen from the bridge of one of the destroyers covering the landing: The cliffs of France at this point are considerable, but there are gullies and tracks between, as shown in our drawing of this section on page 260

THE RAID ON DIEPPE *(continued)*

THE "LANDING BARGE" has now developed into quite a good-sized naval craft. This one was used to transport some of the armoured vehicles which took part in the raid

A BIG FIRE BURNING ON THE FRONT AT DIEPPE, with the smoke of the battle drifting over the town: A picture taken during the Raid

A NAVAL MOTOR-LAUNCH, with four of the landing craft used during the operations. All the vessels bristled with men and guns



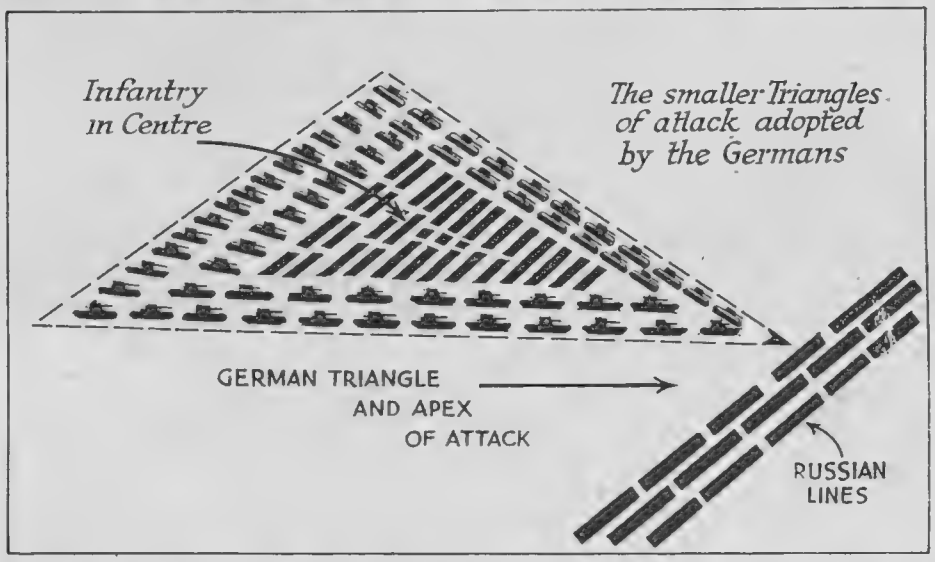
A BOSTON AIRCRAFT SWOOPS IN FROM THE SEA: From her, two bombs are seen descending on German gun-posts. Far below, British naval craft are seen laying a smoke-screen

A DAGGER, KNUCKLEDUSTERS, ROPE AND LIFEBELT—part of a Commando's equipment

A NEAT WAY TO CARRY A LETHAL WEAPON: A dagger fixed in the gaiter of a Commando

AFTER THE RAID WAS OVER: Taking the names of returning soldiers as they came ashore from naval craft at an English port

THE FLAT PLAINS WHICH LEAD TO STALINGRAD, the flattest terrain yet encountered in the present war: "As far as one can see, every side of the earth is as flat and as smooth as an inland sea. . . . This region will soon be the scene of swift, decisive battles"—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*



ATTACK BY ARMOURED "PIGS"—A tactical development on the German front before Stalingrad: In the thrust towards Stalingrad, the Germans recently presented a new method of warfare by attempting to crack the Red defences with a 1942 version of "svinya" (meaning pig), used centuries ago by the Teutonic "dog Knights" against the Russians. Seeking to reach the Don, the Germans formed a triangle of several scores of tanks and filled the interior with infantry. The armoured "pig" then rammed the Soviet lines. But the Red defenders were not caught napping. The artillery opened up on a forward point of the triangle and, smashing nine tanks, broke the "pig" to pieces. Left without cover, the infantry was badly mauled, while the remainder of the tanks retreated

"The moment you step out of an aeroplane at Stalingrad airport, you understand why this region will soon be the scene of swift, decisive battles," writes Mr. Geoffrey Blunden in a recent despatch. "As far as the eye can see, every side of the earth is as flat and as smooth as an inland sea. There is not a tree to be seen, nor a bit of scrub; not even ankle-high grass. . . One had the immediate impression that there must be less cover for military operations in this country than there is even in the Western Desert, for there is not even an escarpment, or a wadi, or a sand-dune here. Advancing tanks would have to be launched with great speed under cover of night to arrive uninterruptedly at battle positions. It would be ideal country for Russian armoured cavalry, with their long-practised tactics of thirty-mile night marches and sudden lightning attacks. In summer the earth is firm and offers any vehicle maximum speed. It is also ideal for aircraft, for the whole country is one vast airfield. Moreover, the air is crystal-clear and the sky is cloudless . . ."

WAR on the RUSSIAN PLAINS

Contrasts Between This Year's Campaign and Last Year's

The winter of 1941-42 forms a convenient dividing-line for the study of the Soviet-German War. In fact, it is a rather misleading distinction, for operations never really ceased on the front as a whole, though the centre of gravity naturally shifted south in the winter. Thus, while the attention of the world was focussed on Moscow in December, the Germans had for some months been keeping up a relentless pressure on the road to the Caucasus, *via* Kiev, the Ukraine and Sebastopol. When Sebastopol did fall at the end of June this year, it had actually endured eight months' siege. The dazzling progress the Germans have made in the south since is the natural fruit of their persistence since last September, and should not be separated from the events of 1941. At the same time, there are some grounds for treating last year's and this year's campaigns separately, for the nature of the fighting has differed considerably, and that to a greater extent than the differing nature of the terrain alone would account for.

After we had had to abandon Crete, and four days after a Turkish pact had cleared the air in that direction, Hitler felt free to order the attack on Russia. On June 22 the attempt commenced. Brest-Litovsk fell on the third day, and Smolensk was reached at the end of the month. Quite early in the campaign, a certain rhythmic quality began to be recognisable in the German advance, particularly once the initial rush through the remnants of Poland had ended. Much of the ebb and flow was due to the heroic resistance of the Russians. Even where local resistance had ceased, it could be noticed that German progress moved in a series of jerks. To outside observers it appeared that the Panzer divisions made the first thrust and created an infiltration through the Russian lines. Motorised infantry followed in their wake and sought, not always successfully and never without heavy loss, to convert the infiltration into a definite breach or "*percée*." Once this was done, a mopping-up period ensued before the next advance. This rhythmic quality was particularly marked in the approach to Kiev, and in the general assault on the Dniester. Three days' hard Panzer fighting, it seemed, were followed by a ten days' lull before the resumption of the advance. Two reasons were put forward in explanation: first, that by the end of three days the tanks had outrun their supply and maintenance columns; and secondly, that in three days they could overrun sufficient country to give their infantry nearly a fortnight's work mopping-up and making their rear safe for supplies.

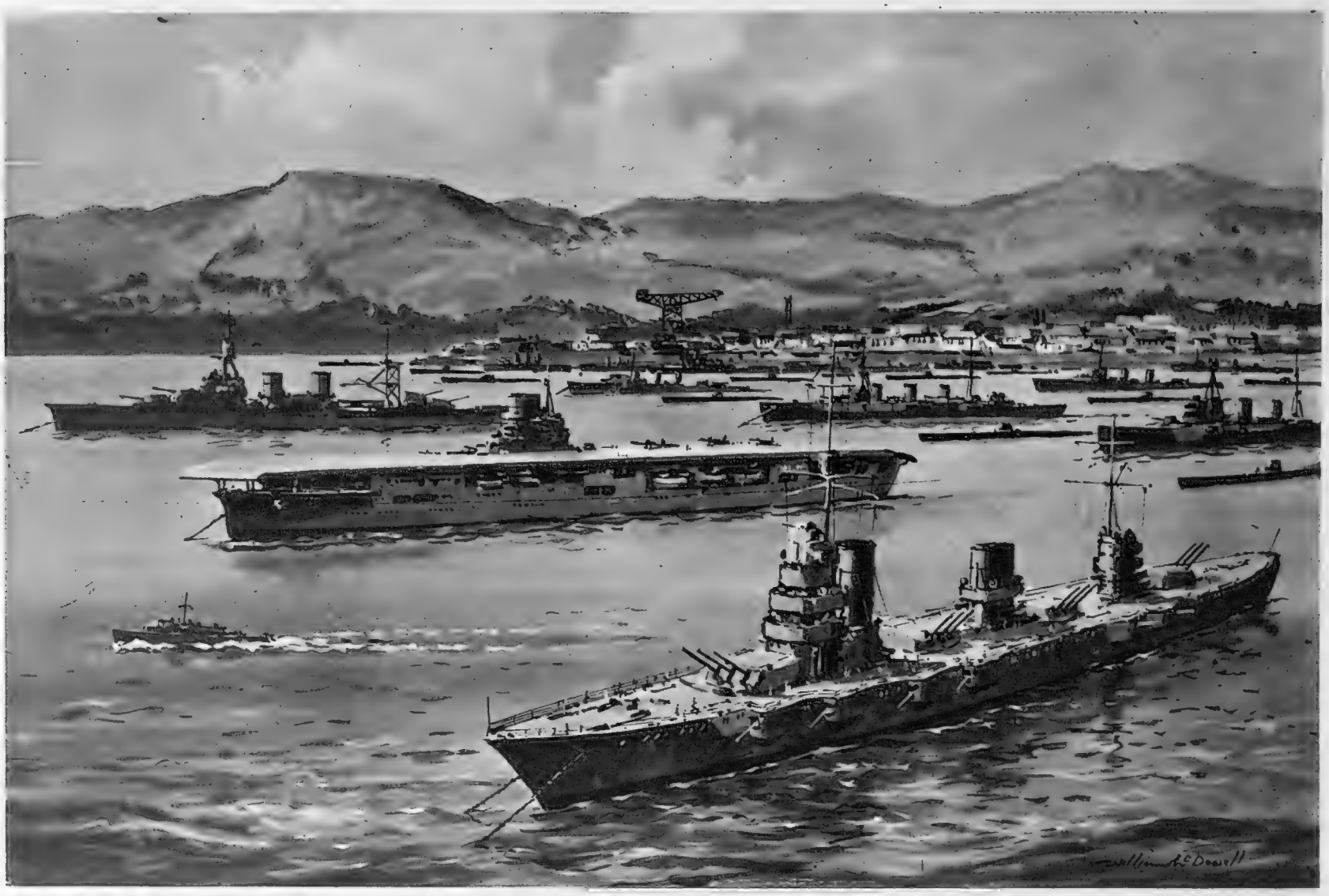
So far this year, no such rhythmic quality has been consistently recognisable. Apart from the steady pressure on Sebastopol, events remained subdued until Timoshenko's offensive on Kharkov. Rostov had been liberated by the Russians in November, and it was obvious to them and the world that the southern front, with Caucasian oil as the prize, would be the scene of the summer struggle. It was not until June that the Germans could resume the offensive. Once they could do so, however, events marched very quickly. Kerch fell on May 18, but the struggle had been so bitter that it took the Germans nearly three weeks to open the final assault on Sebastopol. On June 5 opened twenty-five days of continuous shelling and dive-bombing, and at the end of that period the fortress was in German hands. Since then the German drive into the foothills of the Caucasus, and eastwards on Stalingrad, has proceeded at a rate unequalled except in the earliest days of June 1941. The speed of this phase of the advance has undoubtedly been due to the fact that it has been over country which at this time of the year is ideal for tank operation.

The autumn and winter attacks on Moscow had to be conducted along the few roads available. Fighting therefore centred round such key-points on the approach roads as Kalinin and Orel, where the Russians were able to concentrate their defences. In this summer's campaign, the Germans have been free, as they were in France, to probe and feint, to thrust and withdraw, over fronts in which tanks could roam at will. The Russians, since the fall of Kerch and the Kuban, have never been able to regroup their defences. Now that the fighting is in the Caucasian region the Germans may lose that advantage, and the Russians regain it. Obstacles bestride the road in the direction of most of the possible German objectives. Though fighting may continue here for many months yet, it may be that, as in Rommel's attack on Egypt, they will get far, but not far enough.

W. V. F.

THE CASPIAN SEA, A VITAL AREA FOR THE RUSSIANS, which is now threatened by the German advance to the Caucasus. From Baku and from Persia, the supply routes are now in grave danger

b



THE RUSSIAN BLACK SEA FLEET: After its valiant aid to the defenders of Sebastopol, the Soviet Fleet is now in great danger owing to the German advance into the Caucasus region. Some of the vessels comprising the Fleet are here shown—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

It has been stated that the Russian Black Sea Fleet comprises one battleship, three or four cruisers, an aircraft-carrier, a number of destroyers, and about thirty submarines. But there is no definiteness about these figures, as Soviet policy has been not to publicise its naval strength in any of the war zones. The present position of the Fleet is not a happy one owing to the growing threat to Novorossisk, its most important base outside the Crimea, threatened by the German land advance. The drawing reproduced here depicts the more important units of the Black Sea Fleet. In the foreground is the battleship *Pariskaya-Kommuna*, of 23,000 tons, and armed with 12-in. guns: she was completed in 1915, but underwent an extensive refit in 1931. She went to the Black Sea in the year 1930, in company with the cruiser *Profintern*. Behind the battleship is the aircraft-carrier *Stalin*, a vessel of 9,000 tons which was laid down in 1914 as a cruiser: in 1929 she was redesigned as a carrier and extensive alterations were put in hand; she was finally completed in 1939. In the left background is a cruiser of 8,000 tons of the Krasni Kavkaz type. Also included are three other cruisers, three flotilla leaders, destroyers and submarines

THE RED FLEET IN ACTION in the Black Sea during the siege of Sebastopol: The German plans for the conquest of the Crimea were badly checked by the heroic defence of the fortress, which held up the advance towards the Caucasus for eight months. Warships of the Black Sea Fleet assisted in the defence by shelling the German and Rumanian positions around the town and harbour

The RUSSIAN FLEET in the BLACK SEA

How it is Made Up, and its Prospects for the Future

UNTIL the loss of its chief naval base at Sebastopol, the Russian Fleet was in full command of the Black Sea. There was no opportunity for normal naval activity, for there were no enemy warships to attack, but the Fleet has been busily occupied in supporting the armies on land wherever possible, and in carrying supplies. Its position at the present time is somewhat serious. Driven from Sebastopol, there was the naval base of Novorossisk, on the east coast, to fall back upon, but now that is threatened by the rapidly advancing German forces, already close to Krasnodar, some 75 miles away. According to reports from the German High Command, the Russian Navy is assisting in the evacuation of the coastal

A DESTROYER OF THE STREMITELNI CLASS (possibly the "Besposhtadni") of 1,800 tons. There were thirty-five vessels of this type, of which some were built in Black Sea shipyards. They have a speed of 37 knots, and are armed with 5·1-in. guns

A FLYING-BOAT operated by the Black Sea Fleet prepares for an operational flight

towns of northern Caucasia, presumably for Batum, close to the Turkish frontier. Batum was not regarded as such a good base as either Sebastopol or Novorossisk, lacking protection against bad weather. It is not known whether the Russians have improved the conditions during the past year, but it is certainly the last refuge for the Fleet in the event of any great disaster.

When Russia was hard pressed last October, with the German armies racing forward, many military experts predicted the capture of Astrakhan, and the cutting off of the Caucasus from the rest of Russia. As for the Fleet, they could suggest nothing but fighting to the death, or a dash for the Straits. Yet none of these dire results occurred, and one can only wait upon events.

Great secrecy over military and naval matters was always observed by Russia before the war, so much so that there was considerable guesswork as to number of warships and their condition. Russia was credited with having more submarines than any other Power, but many of them were small, only useful for coastal work. Large ocean-going submarines were naturally not required. About forty submarines are said to have been operating in the Black Sea.

As far as is known, the Black Sea Fleet, at the opening of war, consisted of, one battleship, the *Paris Commune* (*Pariskaya Kommuna*), of 23,000 tons, with a speed of 16 knots; one aeroplane-carrier, the *Stalin*, capable of carrying 23 planes; one cruiser of 8,000 tons, and three cruisers of 6,600 tons. The chief uncertainty lay with the destroyers, of which there were said to be fifty, but whether this number represented those actually constructed, or only laid down, was not known.

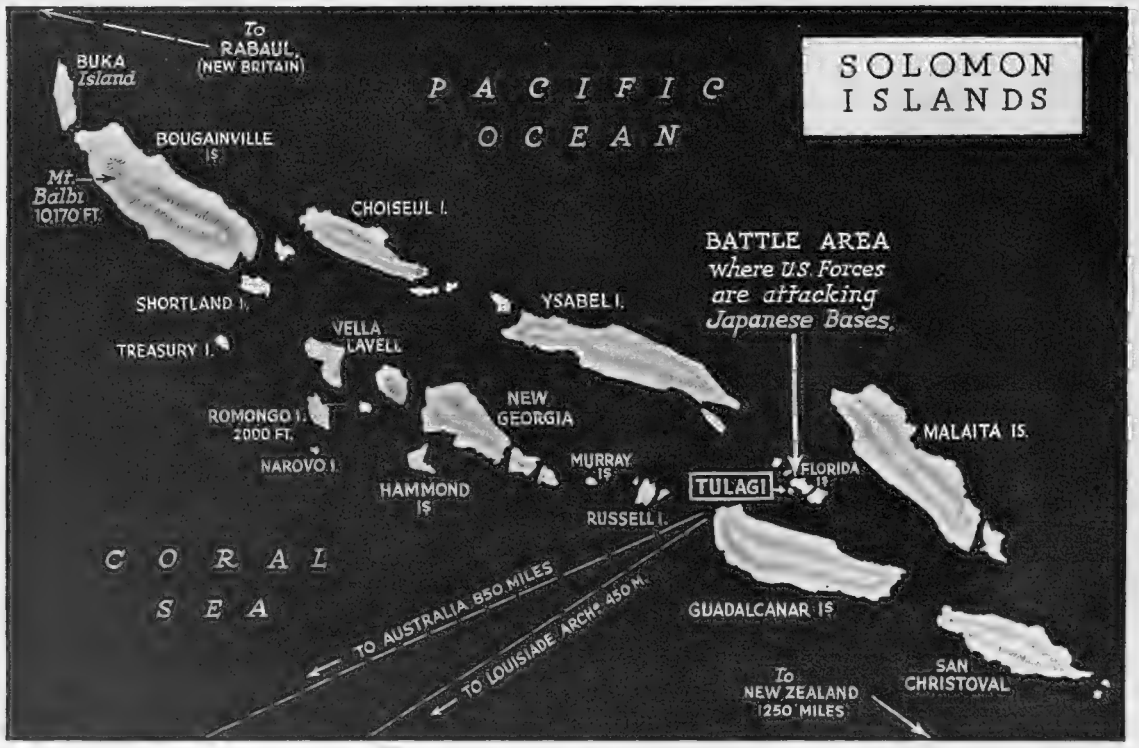
ESCORT DUTIES OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET IN THE BLACK SEA: Members of the crew of a Soviet battleship keep a sharp look-out for enemy aircraft near an A.-A. gun, whilst escorting a transport vessel

It was during the siege of Sebastopol that the Fleet showed heroic qualities, sharing the honours which the citizens and garrison of that courageous city have so nobly earned. Admiral Oktyabrsky was in command of the combined forces, using the Fleet to its fullest extent to assist the land forces. During the first siege, last autumn, the Fleet was able to shell the German positions, and it is said that the landing of the marines saved the city when the Germans made their last furious assault before the winter. But in June this year, the Germans had seized so many of the airfields, and maintained so tremendous an air superiority that the Fleet could no longer approach the shores in the same manner. It did, however, brave the persistent dive-bombers to bring the necessary munitions and food supplies, though the short moonlit nights afforded no shelter. The wounded were carried off, day by day, and when the end came, and Sebastopol could resist no longer, the survivors were evacuated, in the face of all risks.

Nothing of value was left in the one-time great naval port, which had never surrendered. The Germans, after incredible losses, entered a city of ruins.

THE EVACUATION OF THE RED ARMY FROM RUSSIA'S BIG NAVAL BASE AT NOVOROSSISK IN THE BLACK SEA—*Drawing by Percy Home*

While one German army was thrusting its way south-east towards Cherkessk on the land side of the Caucasus range, other forces were pressing towards the Black Sea from the direction of Krasnodar with the idea of surrounding the Russian army in this area. This necessitated the crossing of the Kuban River and the scaling of the first foothills of the mountain chain. The resistance of the Russian forces gave time for the evacuation of large bodies of Russian troops from Anapa, Novorossisk and Tuapse. Any actions would take upon themselves the character of mountain warfare. Experts held that Novorossisk itself presented a difficult problem to the enemy, as this Black Sea naval port was naturally guarded by high, steep hills which lay round it on all sides. The road from Krasnodar comes over the hills and plunges down to the port in a series of hairpin loops. A lower road runs south-east to Tuapse and Sukhum, a secondary port, which was in a position of danger if the enemy made a thrust towards the Cherkessk Pass, which gives access to the Black Sea at this point



THE ISLANDS OF THE SOLOMON GROUP in the South-West Pacific, where the Japs were preparing for the invasion of Australia : This is the British archipelago in the South Seas where the Japs established themselves some months ago. At Tulagi they were preparing a strong naval base, from which to raid the route between Australia and America ; on Guadalcanar Island air bases were being built ; on Florida Island strong forces were being concentrated. Most of the islands of this group are mountainous and fringed with coral-reefs, and earthquakes are frequent. It is not so many years ago that head-hunters roamed the islands and cannibalism was a common practice

The AMERICAN ATTACKS in the SOLOMONS

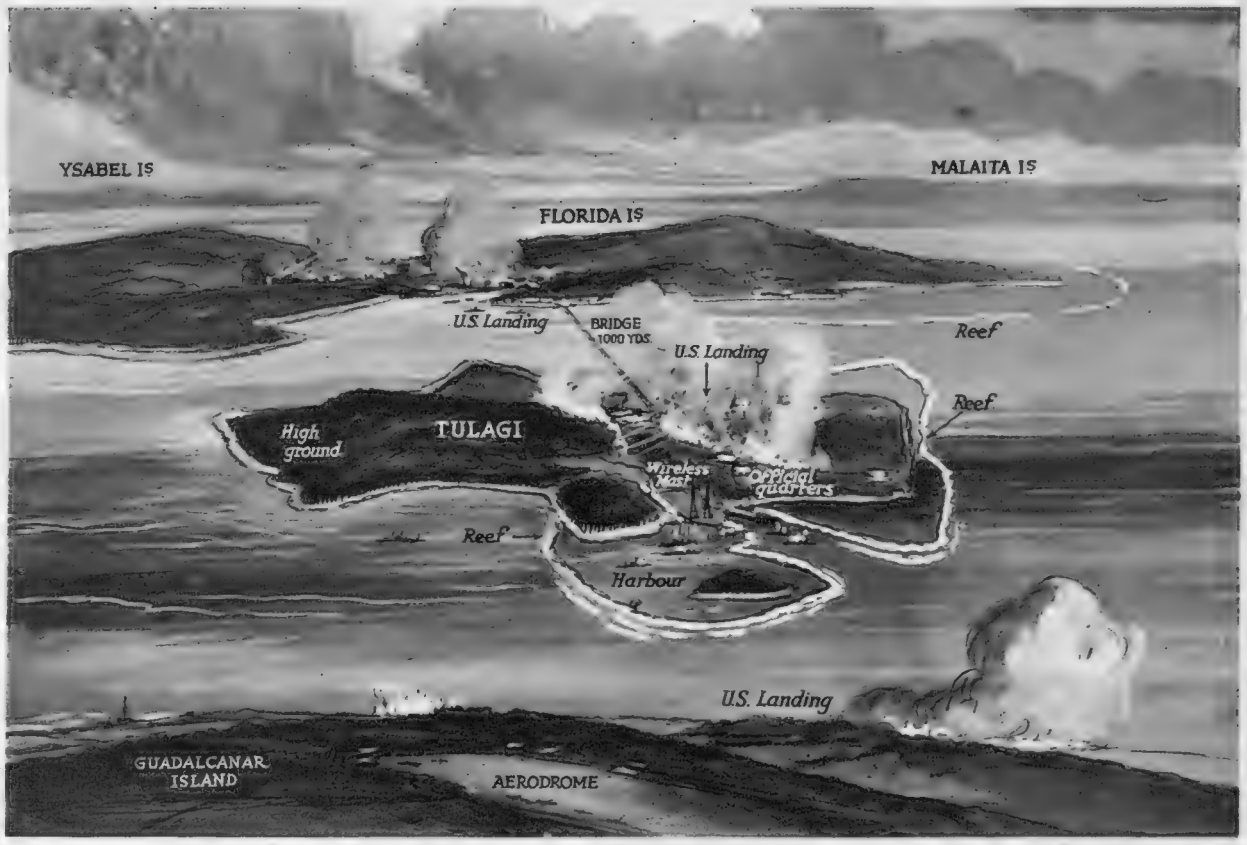
Where Landings were Made on Tulagi and Other Islands of Great Strategic Importance in the Pacific

SINCE the Japanese conquest of Malaya, the enemy has been creeping closer and closer towards the great Australian continent, until a semi-circle of occupation had been completed to the north-west amongst the large and small islands with which the vast Pacific is here studded. The invasion area swept from Timor and New Guinea right round to the archipelago of the Solomons—until, suddenly, the Australian people became aware of their great danger. And then the High Command of the U.S. Navy decided that the hour had come to strike.

In *their* campaign in the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines and other Pacific islands, the Japanese used a new technique of combined land, sea and air assault. The lessons of these campaigns were studied and adapted by the U.S. Navy : the Marines, famed fighting corps trained in quick shooting at surprise targets, knocking snipers from trees, attacking under a barrage of live ammunition, hand-to-hand combat, knife and small-arm fighting and ju-jitsu, formed the spearhead in the Solomon landing operations.

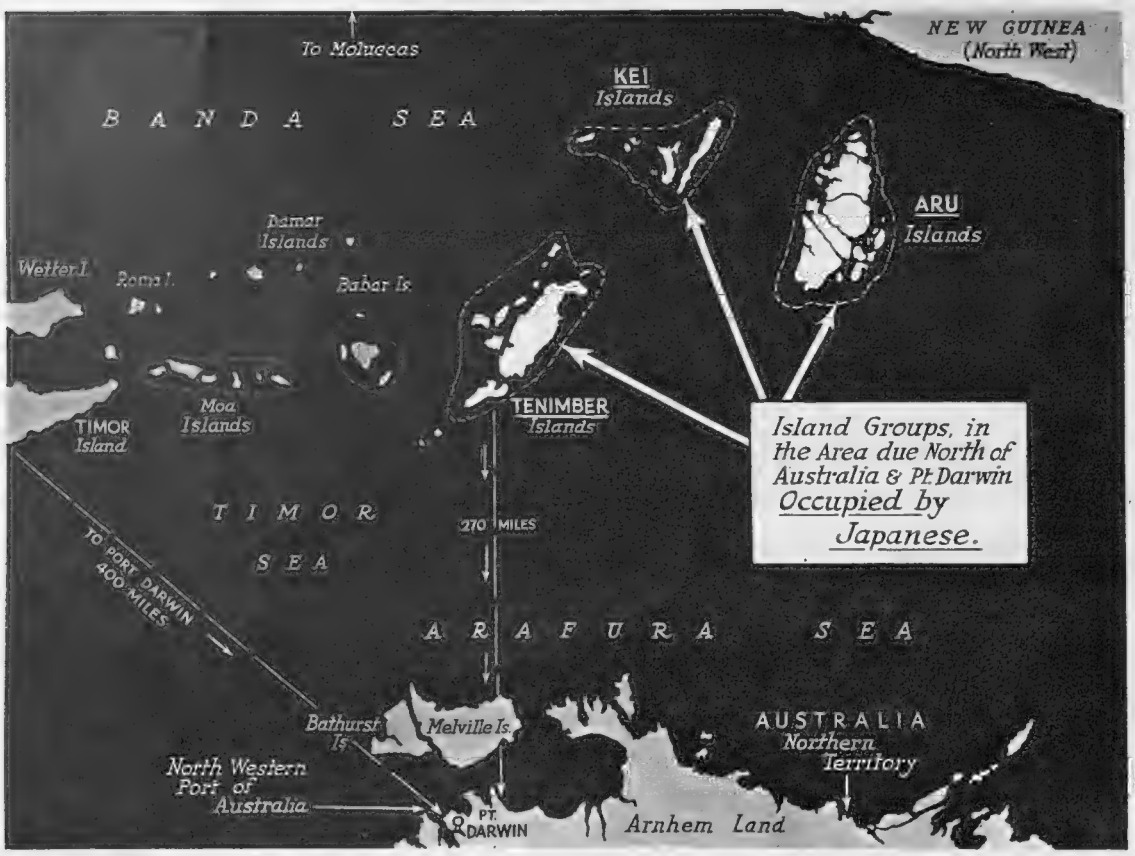
Operations first began almost exactly three weeks ago, when landings were made by the Marines on three islands in the vicinity of Tulagi. This might be regarded as the nerve-centre of the whole Solomon group : its importance is greatly enhanced by its harbour, one of the finest in this part of the Pacific. Here the Japanese had been constructing a naval base for the purpose of threatening the sea routes between Australia and the United States. Not far away, on Guadalcanar Island, air bases were in course of construction for the Jap air forces.

When the U.S. Navy decided to attack, Tulagi, Guadalcanar and Florida were all singled out for special attention. In the early morning of August 7 the attack opened, the enemy were taken completely by surprise and eighteen of their seaplanes were destroyed before they could get into action. Shore positions, taken by the landing-parties, were developed rapidly ; when the inevitable counter-attack by the Japs came the U.S. forces were well placed to beat them off.



THE THREE LANDINGS MADE BY THE U.S. MARINES—on Tulagi, Florida and Guadalcanar Islands
—Drawing by Percy Home

So far as the Japs were concerned, this was the very centre of the whole Solomon group, with Tulagi as the key-point, on account of its fine harbour which they were converting into a naval base. Connecting Tulagi with Florida, the Japs had built a bridge 1,000 yards long : this is now probably in ruins. The shores of Florida Island are muddy and swampy, and behind rise rugged hills difficult to cross in face of enemy opposition. On Guadalcanar Island are the airfields operated by the Jap Air Forces



On the night of August 8-9, a naval battle also developed, as a result of which the Japs put forward some magniloquent claims—which, however, they played down considerably later on. The enemy found, in fact, that their claim to have sunk " thirteen cruisers, nine destroyers, three submarines and ten transports," and to have " isolated " Australia, left that continent remarkably unmoved !

In actual fact, it would appear that their chief aerodrome in the Solomons has been put out of action, the U.S. Marines have established themselves strongly on the islands and the U.S. Navy is in control of the situation.

If the Japs can be held in this area the danger to Australia must be considerably lessened—in fact, the whole striking power of the Japanese Navy may seriously be impaired if the Americans extend—or even retain—their ascendancy.

***On left*—THE " ENCIRCLEMENT " OF AUSTRALIA : The Japs creep nearer to the north coast.** It was only a few days before the great attack on the Solomons that General MacArthur's headquarters confirmed that the Japanese had occupied the islands of Tenimber, Kei and Aru, in the Arafura Sea. This brought the enemy to within 250 miles of Port Darwin, strategic outpost of Australian defence. Timor and parts of New Guinea have been held by the Japs for some time. It is obvious, therefore, that they have been creeping closer and closer towards their ultimate objectives on the Australian mainland

U.S. PREPARATIONS for PACIFIC INVASION

THE NEW INVASION BARGES MADE FOR THE U.S. MARINES : This picture was taken in a south-eastern State in America during invasion rehearsals by the U.S. Marines. The barge is open-topped and runs on caterpillar tracks : these have been fitted with projection blades to carry it over land or through the water at a good speed. A tank in itself when operating on land, the barge can ferry troops to the shore, carry them up the beach to the enemy and then provide them with a mobile fortress from which to carry on the fight ! It is universally admitted that, in the design and construction of devices such as these, the Americans have no rivals in the world to-day

A PARTY OF MARINES LAND IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC : These men have just disembarked from a transport into a special "going-ashore" lighter to be landed on an island within the Pacific fighting area

REHEARSAL FOR THE SOLOMONS : Exploding land-mines give the U.S. Marines a taste of battle conditions during their training at a South-West Pacific outpost for the assault on the Jap-occupied islands of the Solomon group. The landing-boats on the right of the picture are bringing a second wave of Marines ashore after the storming force has established its bridgehead on the land

ABOVE AN UNDISCLOSED PACIFIC ISLAND, scout-bombers keep watch whilst the Navy Construction Corps and U.S. Army engineers set up a naval base after the occupation of the island by Army, Navy and Marine units

TRUCKS LOADED WITH MARINES pick their way across a treacherous tidal flat during the assault on a tropical island. A scout car leads the way. In the background is a transport at sea, with small landing-boats

A GENERAL VIEW OF ICELAND, the land of the Vikings, now occupied by an Allied Army consisting of British and American troops. This relief drawing shows the glacier caps, the lower ground in the south, and the high, rocky ground to the north, with inlets resembling the fjords of Norway—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

After the war, Iceland is to become a Republic under its own Regent. At present it is held by an Allied Army against the threat of invasion by Germany—which, at one time, was a very real danger. The island has a population of some 120,000, scattered over its area of 40,450 square miles (or one-fifth larger than Ireland). The island is a mountainous plateau of volcanic rocks, with an average altitude of 2,000 ft. The lowlands, the only parts of economic value, comprise about one-fifth of the total area, and are found principally in the south and south-west—though many are barren, sandy wastes. The coasts, except on the south, are high, rugged and deeply indented by long fjords, which provide good harbours. To the north, in winter, the waters are sometimes icebound, lying as they do within the Arctic Circle. The importance of Iceland to the Allies hardly needs stressing, especially in view of the need to keep the supply lines to Northern Britain and to Russia open. The Icelanders, a hardy and industrious people, are descendants of the ancient Vikings. At first opposed to the Allied occupation, they are now grateful for the protection our troops afford against an invasion by the Germans and the desecration of their country

THE OCCUPATION OF ICELAND

Which has Just Suffered its First Attacks from the Germans

—Special drawings and diagrams

ICELAND has just experienced her first contact with actual war. A German plane dropped bombs on the island on August 3, and a lighthouse was attacked two days later. Single Nazi planes have flown over, obviously on reconnaissance work, preparatory for a new phase in the German Atlantic campaign, concentrating on Iceland, which stands across the sea-lanes between the United States and Great Britain.

GERMANY GIVES ICELAND ITS FIRST TOUCH OF WAR, by launching a co-ordinated bomber and submarine campaign against its shipping and against the coastal defences—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

A fortnight ago, for the first time, German bombers attacked military works on Iceland, bombing and machine-gunning a small military area in the south-east corner; two days later, another bomber attacked a lighthouse. Apparently the German aircraft take advantage of cloud to come in close along the coast. There is also evidence of increasing submarine activity in the waters surrounding this island: British, Norwegian and American air-crews are, however, maintaining a ceaseless watch, and frequently carry out patrols lasting for ten hours. The island defences are also strongly manned, guns of all types guarding the coast. Here is a typical stretch of shore-line, with a natural defence bank; behind rises a typical square-topped range, stratified and partially covered with snow

Relying upon her isolation and lack of material wealth, Iceland has always stood aside from the great European conflicts, so much so, that there was no attempt made at any form of defence, no armed force of any kind. Seventy police constituted the sole authority of the Government. Iceland had the pleasing sensation, along with her kindred in Northern Europe—Denmark, Norway and Sweden—that she set a good example to quarrelling nations, and at the same time trusted them to respect her peaceful intentions.

In 1918, a treaty was arranged with Denmark, creating a union between the "two free and sovereign States," the sole link being the King of Denmark, who was to become King of Iceland. When Denmark fell under the power of Germany in April 1940, the Icelandic Government at once broke the connection, the Government taking over the Royal duties. The following year the Union was completely severed, when a Regent was appointed in June, for the war period, after which it is intended to set up a republic. The population of Iceland numbers 120,000, a small unit for such isolated independence in a world in which distance has been so greatly curtailed.

One of the immediate difficulties which faced Iceland when Denmark was invaded was the loss of trade, both import and export. Germany and Denmark had been her chief customers, and when all communication with them was cut off, she was left with great supplies of fish, mutton and wool, the chief source of her wealth, without the necessary customers. But owing to an unexpected event, Iceland found purchasers for all she could supply, and the islanders are growing rich.

That event was the landing of a British army of occupation on May 10, 1940. The British Government gave assurance that the occupation was solely to prevent Iceland from falling into Hitler's clutches; that no interference would be made with the Icelandic Government; and that the army would retire at the end of the war. Though Iceland did not desire the presence of the troops, they were accepted as inevitable, and were generally well received. The good conduct of the troops, and their friendly manners won the approval of the Government.

The British and Canadian forces have had many difficulties to contend with, the physical conditions of the island being very strenuous. It has been described as "a wild land of barrenness and lava; swallowed many months of every year in black tempests, yet with a

wild gleaming beauty in summer-time; with snow jokuls, roaring geysers, sulphur pools, and horrid volcanic chasms, like the waste chaotic battlefield of Frost and Fire." A perpetual gale tears across the treeless wastes, bursting out on occasion into fierce hurricanes, such as occurred last February, when a wind of a velocity of 133 miles an hour tore roofs off buildings, made Nissen huts collapse, and caused great anxiety on the airfields, where it was difficult to keep the planes from being torn off the ground, in spite of being tethered to heavy concrete blocks.

The official announcement of the occupation of Iceland, coming as it did at the critical moment when Hitler was overrunning Holland and Belgium, appeared to many at that time as a very remote operation when our troops might have been better employed. But the importance of Iceland was well known to Germany, who had been cultivating the friendship of Iceland for many years. It was obviously an ideal position for submarine and air-bases, and for meteorological observation—all of which had been schemed, and much anti-British feeling fostered.

In July last year, American troops landed in Iceland to secure vital communications, after having agreed to the conditions laid down by the Icelandic Government. These were similar to the guarantees given by the British, but with added insistence upon the recognition of the sovereign rights of Iceland. The British and American troops, naval, military and air force, are co-operating in the safeguarding of Iceland from possible Nazi attack. The Allied forces have recently been engaged, according to the latest news, in very extensive military operations, involving the use of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

A MAIN STREET IN THE CAPITAL, REYKJAVIK: Solid buildings of stone and brick lie side by side with typical wooden houses of the Far North. The girls are surprisingly modern in dress—and outlook!

AN HISTORIC SPOT—Where the First Icelandic Parliament met: The Thingvellir, the meeting-place of the Free Men of Iceland in the Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries, where the Premier of the early Icelandic Parliaments stood to address the People of the Plains. The high rock-face on the left acts as a sounding-board; and the mountain seen in the distance is an extinct volcano. This spot is about a day's journey from Reykjavik, and lies to the north-east of that town. The rocky plain witnessed from this vantage point is typical of much of the scenery of Iceland

A VIEW OF THE TOWN OF REYKJAVIK, CAPITAL OF ICELAND, looking northwards across the Inner and Outer Harbours to Faxa Fiord: in aspect, it is very similar to a large Norwegian township, with many big modern buildings, to which a military hospital has recently been added—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

Since the first day of the year 1919, Iceland has been a free sovereign state, united with Denmark only in having the same sovereign; with the occupation of Denmark by the Germans in 1940, the whole economic structure of the island was in danger of collapse, until its occupation by the Allies, since when the islanders have grown rich by selling all their produce to the Army and Navy and Air Force. The town of Reykjavik is surprisingly modern in aspect, with many large buildings, which reflect the prosperity and culture of the island. After an initial period of some distrust, the townsfolk of Reykjavik entered into cordial relationships with the Army of Occupation, and now the utmost friendliness prevails (See *also following pages*)

UNITS OF THE AMERICAN NAVY GUARD THE WATERS AROUND ICELAND: HERE DESTROYERS AND OTHER VESSELS RIDE AT ANCHOR IN THE HARBOUR A[
are both of the modern Dunlap class: a big transport is seen on the extrem[

WITH THE ATLANTIC FLEET OFF ICELAND: Rear-Admiral Robert C. Giffen looks at the rocky, snow-covered northern coastline from one of the ships of the U.S. Fleet under his command in the Atlantic

For many months past, British, [N]
and sailors have participated [i]
looks as if they may soon see actio[n]
that German bombers and subm[a]
attacks on the island.

Iceland occupies a strategic po[si]
in point of fact, essential to the p[o]
firmly—to safeguard the convoy r[o]
Were it to fall into enemy hands, i[t]
craft, submarines and surface vessels
shipping.

The rocky nature of the coastli[ne]
Norway, provides excellent anch[o]
not all the inlets are suitable for [t]
nature of the surrounding countr[y]
supply. At Reykjavik, the har[b]
vessels. Some of these are indic[a]

The Dunlap class of U.S. destr[o]
modern vessels: they were laid d[o]
completed in 1938. Of 1,490 tons
overall and have a beam of over [3]
five 5-in. dual-purpose guns and fo[ur]
torpedo-tubes. Speed is 36½ kno[ts]

The two photographs reproduc[ed]
taken during the course of a [v]
command of Rear-Admiral Robert
this occasion the job of the n[a]
troops and supplies reached Icela[nd]

REYKJAVIK ON THEIR RETURN FROM PATROL OUT IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC ON THE CONVOY ROUTES : The two destroyers of the U.S. Navy at rest in the fiord left, and a U.S. naval pinnace in the left foreground—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

Norwegian and American soldiers
the defence of Iceland. It now
n, as recent reports have indicated
rines are preparing to carry out

ition in the North Atlantic : it is,
plans of the Allies that it be held
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it could be used as a base for air-
ds to wreak havoc on our merchant

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and the consequent difficulties of
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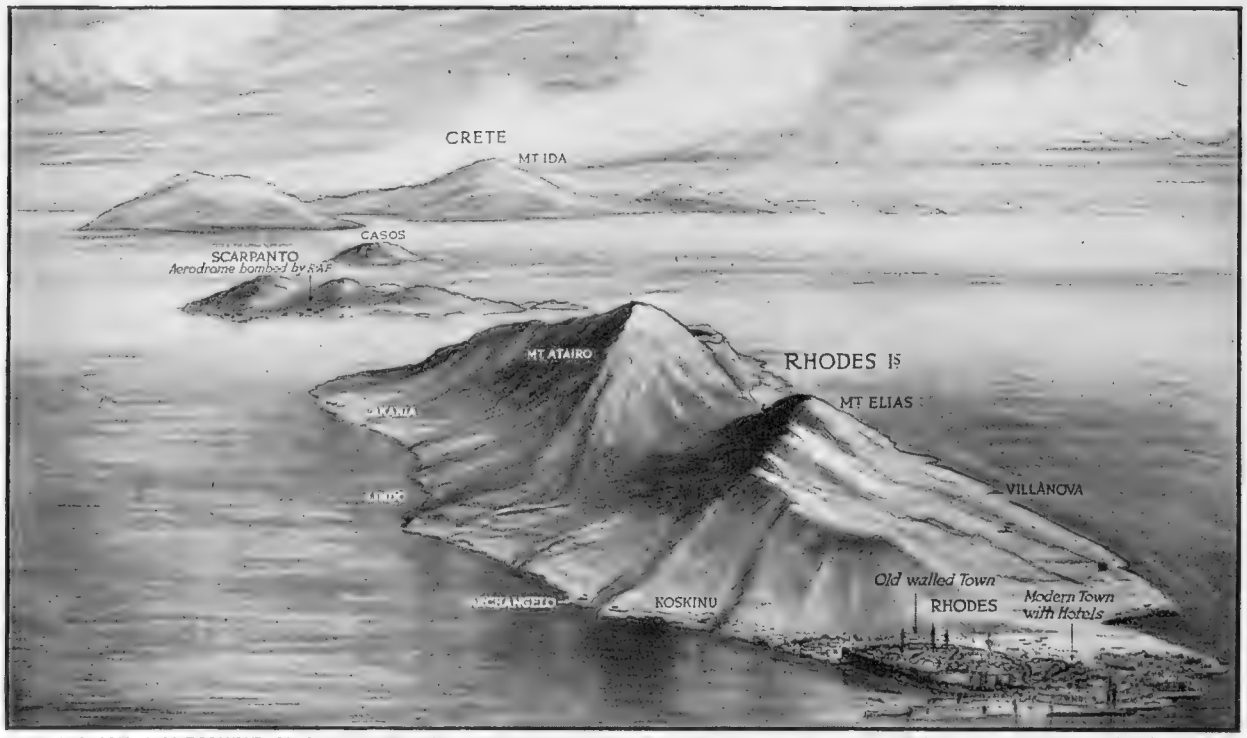
ated in the drawing above.
oyer depicted by Mr. Dawson are
own in 1935, launched in 1936 and
displacement, they measure 341 ft.
34 ft. Their armament consists of
ir machine-guns, with twelve 21-in.
s and radius of action 6,000 miles.
ed to left and right were both
North Atlantic convoy under the
C. Giffen of the U.S. Navy. On
aval vessels was to ensure that
d in safety.

CONVOYING TROOPS AND SUPPLIES TO ICELAND : Rear-Admiral Giffen with Lieut. T. A. Torgenson checking their plans on the bridge before landing on arrival at their northern destination



THE ITALIAN DODECANESE ISLANDS OFF THE TURKISH COAST, where land-based Italian fighters attempt to dominate the Eastern Mediterranean and where Scarpanto is a most important base for both bombers and fighters. The chief town, Rhodes, has just experienced another bombardment by a Squadron commanded by Admiral Vian—*Drawing by Percy Home*

THE ROYAL NAVY IN ACTION

In the Channel and in the Mediterranean

(With a note on the Dodecanese Islands by Douglas Glen)

THE Dodecanese Islands have recently been receiving marked attention both from R.A.F. bombers and the Navy. Aerodromes have been "strafed" and the Island of Rhodes bombarded at night. These attentions are probably due to the reports of various forms of activity in this Eastern Mediterranean area and at Varna, in the Black Sea. Seventy thousand men are reported to have been landed in the Dodecanese within the past few weeks: 50,000 men (half German and half Italian) in the island of Crete, while at Varna there has been an assembly of small craft and barges on an extensive scale. It is with the Dodecanese evidently that the Eastern Commands are principally concerned at the present time.

Strongly fortified in recent times by the Italians, and lying but 60 or 70 miles distant from Crete and 250 miles from Cyprus, they provide Italy's German masters with aerial and naval bases of great potential value and excellent harbours for their ships. Moreover, they are within easy flying distance of Alexandria, Suez and Haifa, and now that Greece has fallen to the Axis, they have become a constant menace to British communications in the Eastern Mediterranean. Scattered along the western coast of Anatolia, their possession gives the enemy a base from which to threaten and, perhaps, coerce Turkey, and a jumping-off ground for an incursion into Asia Minor. The Italians occupied the islands in 1912 during their war against Turkey for possession of Tripoli, when Italy's foreign policy was directed to an extension of her Empire into Asia Minor. At the end of that war a treaty was concluded which provided for the return of the Dodecanese to the Turks so soon as their evacuation of Libya should be completed: a provision which the Italians failed to implement.

Then came the war of 1914, and Italy undertook to cede the islands, except Rhodes, whose fate was to be subject to a contingency, to Greece. By the Secret Treaty of London in 1915, however, Italy was promised full possession of all twelve islands as an inducement to enter the war on the side of the Allies. In spite of this somewhat questionable bargain, Mr. Venizelos was able to reach an agreement with Italy in 1920 whereby, once more, the Dodecanese would be handed over to Greece. Nevertheless, Italy again failed to fulfil her engagement, for upon the accession of a Fascist Government to power, the convention was denounced and the islands were formally annexed by Italy.

Long before these events, their strategic value caused the Dodecanese to be coveted, and many times seized, by nations which needed a foothold in the Eastern Mediterranean from which to pursue aims of conquest and domination in Northern Africa and Asia Minor. Yet the population, approximately 140,000, is predominantly Greek in origin and in tradition, language and religion. At one period or another throughout the last 2,000 years, they have been compelled to submit to the Byzantines, the Coreans, the Genoese, the Macedonians, the Persians, the Romans, the Saracens, the Turks, and now to the Italians.

All through their stormy history, the islands have struggled for independence or for incorporation into the parent state of Greece, the agitation being carried on vigorously by an almost unanimous populace right up to the outbreak of the present war. With rare and fleeting exceptions, however, their wishes have been overruled. In 1522, Rhodes fell to the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the other islands being absorbed into the Ottoman Empire fifteen years later. They remained in the hands of the Turks until the Italian naval forces occupied them in 1912.

Historically speaking, the Dodecanese are twelve in number, the name deriving from the Greek words *dodeca*, meaning twelve, and *nesos*, islands. These were the islands of Kos, Patmos, Khalki, Telos, Kasoos, Astypalaia, Karpathos, Leros, Kalymnos, Symi, Lipsos and Nisyros. Grouped with them geographically, however, and now of immediate importance, are Rhodes and Castellorizzo, as well as

A NEW BRITISH DESTROYER UNDERGOES HER TRIALS: One of the new British vessels now coming into service from British naval shipyards is here going through trials prior to "acceptance" by the Navy. The picture was taken on the "Measured Mile," whilst the Admiralty Inspector, stop-watch in hand, checked the destroyer's speed

***On right*—CLOSE WORK AT SEA: The enemy surprised during a night attack by British coastal boats—**
Drawing by Wm. McDowell

The action depicted here occurred during a night in July, when two British coastal craft and German minesweepers came into sharp conflict during a very close action, when the sides of the fighting vessels actually scraped together. The two British boats were patrolling off the French coast when the commander of the leading vessel saw two vague outlines on his port bow. He at once opened fire at a range of about 150 yards: the enemy was obviously taken by surprise, and the leading German minesweeper was hit and blew up with a terrific flash. Two more German sweepers were then hotly engaged: one of them turned towards the British vessel, obviously out of control and in a sinking condition. Collision was inevitable, and the German minesweeper hit the British boat on the port bow and then slid along the side, raked from stem to stern by gunfire at point-blank range. As she slid clear astern, she sank. Still more German vessels came into the action, and two of them actually engaged each other briskly! Our two boats returned to harbour without casualties, after an engagement in which two German minesweepers were sunk and at least three others were severely damaged

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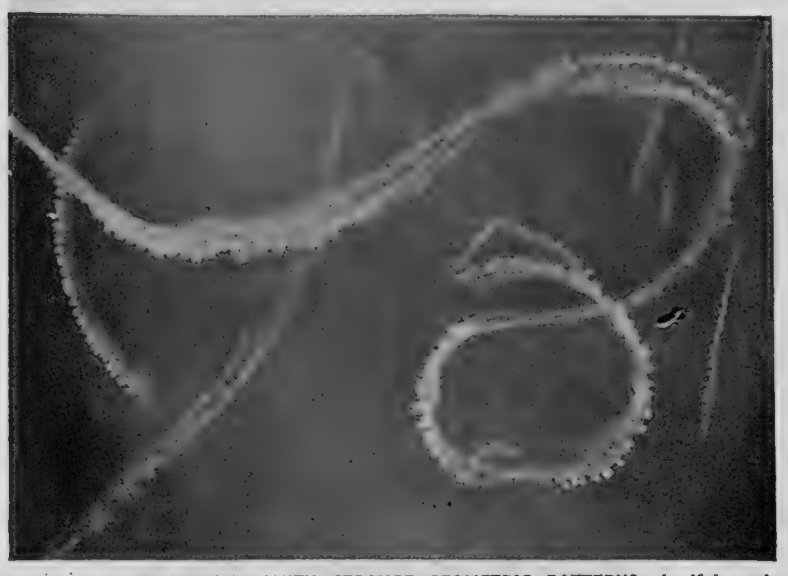
WHEN THE SOUTH-EASTERN COUNTRYSIDE WAS LITTERED WITH THE WRECKAGE OF THE "LUFTWAFFE": A crashed German plane sprawled out on the beach after it had been shot down during the Battle of Britain—a picture taken in the month of August 1940



THE SKIES WERE FILLED WITH STRANGE GEOMETRIC PATTERNS, signifying the dog-fights which were never ending during the August days of 1940

TWO YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

When the R.A.F. Beat the Luftwaffe in the "Battle of Britain"

The second anniversary of the Battle of Britain has come round, and jumping the intervening two years, one can look on the epic August of 1940, when the German air force made its bid to conquer Britain. One cannot but thrill again to the story of the Homeric fights over the Channel and the fields of Kent and Sussex littered with the carcasses of fallen German planes. Sometimes 800 planes would attack, and out of these nearly 200 would crash to earth or sea.

According to the official Air Ministry record, the avowed object of the enemy in the Battle of Britain was to obtain a quick decision and to end the war by the autumn or early winter of 1940. To achieve this, an invasion was evidently thought to be essential. By August 8 the enemy felt himself ready to begin the opening phase.

Before the German Army could land it was necessary to destroy our coastal convoys, to sink or immobilise such units of the Royal Navy as would dispute its passage, and above all to drive the Royal Air Force from the sky.

There were four phases in the battle, the first from August 8-18, the second from August 19 to September 5, the third from September 6 to October 5, the fourth from October 6-31. During this last phase daylight attacks gave way gradually to night raids, which increased as the month went on. It should, however, be remembered that throughout the battle the enemy made use of night as well as day bombing, the first growing in volume and violence as the second fell away.

In the first stage the enemy sent over massed formations of bombers escorted by similar formations of single- and twin-engined fighters. The fighter escorts flew in large, unwieldy formations, from 5,000 to 10,000 ft. above the bombers, where the protection they afforded was not very effective. Using these tactical formations, the enemy made twenty-six attacks during this first stage. He began by renewing his assaults on our shipping. He may also have wished to test the strength of our general defences. Success against these would augur well for the next stage.

The enemy renewed the assault on the 11th, choosing as his targets the towns of Portland and Weymouth, as well as convoys in the Thames Estuary and off Norwich. In these attacks he relied greatly on dive-bombers, but by this time German losses were already very considerable, for 182 aircraft had been destroyed.

On the 13th and 15th the attacks on Portsmouth were renewed, and in some of them—notably that which began soon after five in the afternoon of the 15th—between 300 and 400 aircraft were employed. The enemy was by now beginning to realise that our fighter force was considerably stronger than he had imagined. It was evidently time to take drastic action.

Between the end of the first stage and the active beginning of the second there was, as has been said, an interval of five days, which was spent by the Germans in widespread reconnaissance by single aircraft, some of which indulged in the spasmodic bombing of aerodromes. These operations cost them thirty-nine aircraft shot down.

The main attack was now delivered on a wider front. Enemy tactics were also changed. The number of escorting fighters was increased and the size of bomber formations reduced. From August 24-29 he still showed an interest in Portland, Dover and Manston, all of which were heavily attacked.

On the 25th he returned to Portsmouth and Southampton, where once again he achieved no success, the main attack, delivered at 4 p.m., going astray. Heavy assaults were also made in the Dover-Folkestone area, and over the Thames Estuary and in Kent. These continued with a lull of one day until August 30. On that day and the next the assault was switched to inland fighter aerodromes. Eight hundred aircraft were used in a most determined effort to destroy or temporarily put out of use the aerodromes at Kenley, North Weald, Hornchurch, Debden, Lympne, Detling, Duxford, Northolt and Biggin Hill—but without real success.

EXHAUST TRAILS DURING AN AUGUST 1940 AERIAL BATTLE, in the course of which the "Luftwaffe" lost 140 out of 600 planes sent to attack Britain

AN ATTACK ON A BRITISH CONVOY PASSING THROUGH THE STRAITS in August 1940, when Germany thought that our submission was imminent

DIVE-BOMBING OVER A SOUTH-EASTERN COAST TOWN in August 1940, a German aircraft let go a stick of bombs which fell harmlessly in the sea

INFORMATION AND PROPAGANDA FROM LONDON

How the Ministry of Information was Conceived Before Munich, and Its Early and Very Confused History in the First Days of the War. To-day it is a Vast Organisation of Surprising Efficiency, and Covering So Many Fields as to Stagger the Average Citizen Who Has Never Been Told in Completeness of Its Great Complexity

By CHARLES GRAVES

THE World War enters on its fourth year within the next week. So does the Ministry of Information. People have always been notoriously allergic to prophets in their own country, so listen to the following tribute paid to it in a leading Swedish newspaper: "People in England are too close to the Ministry of Information to appreciate its work," writes Eric Swenne, the London correspondent of *Aftonbladet*. "It is like sitting on Mont Blanc—you just visualise a rock and none of the grand effect. The Ministry of Information, in spite of its avalanches, has done magnificent work. German propaganda, on the other hand, is third-rate; it is short-term, and must therefore work to its own destruction."

It is true that one must always suspect the Greeks bearing gifts, but it is also a fact that over a year ago the German commentator from Zeesen said, "There is, however, one sector of modern warfare in which the English have displayed a certain skill—that of propaganda."

In Great Britain, the Ministry of Information has only recently begun to earn public respect, although its original skeleton formation was worked out over five years ago. Just before Munich a planning committee was set up by the Treasury, with Sir Stephen Tallents as the first Director-General designate. Offices of the Board of Education were acquired in Whitehall, and Earl Stanhope (probably because he was President of the Board of Education) was made the first Minister. News and censorship divisions were prepared to operate in case Chamberlain's visit to Hitler failed to avert war. A number of newspaper men were earmarked to form the nucleus of the News Division, and several ex-Army and ex-Navy officers were called up and given courses in censorship. This lasted for two or three weeks; but when the Munich crisis eased, everything went back, and the offices were evacuated. Sir Ernest Fass, the Public Trustee, took the place of Sir Stephen Tallents, and the amœbic Ministry came under the Home Office.

This phase lasted until some months before the war, and it was decided to take over the Imperial Institute at Kensington as offices. This building was actually wired for communication, but it was decided, after all, that it was too far from Fleet Street. The only buildings available, and also accessible to Fleet Street, were those of the London University. And right from the start the cardinal principle of planning the Ministry of Information was co-operation with the Press.

It was at this period that voluntary censorship was agreed upon. It was only three days before the outbreak of war that the Ministry of Information moved into the University of London buildings. Fortunately, Mr. J. H. Brebner, O.B.E., Controller of Press Information and Publications at the Post Office, was appointed as Chief of the News Division, Ministry of Information, and his personal pull enabled him to secure Post Office mechanics in relays. Without the assistance of the Post Office and the skill of its engineers, the Ministry would not have been able to function on the outbreak of war. Carpenters were still putting down the linoleum and fixing chairs and desks while the Press was receiving its first communiqués.

A succession of Ministers and Directors-General followed. They included Lord Reith, Sir Findlater Stewart and Mr. Duff Cooper. Lord Camrose had been Director of the News Division and Chief Press Adviser to the Minister. But as soon as he had separated the news and censorship from the Ministry and combined it into the present censorship bureau, he resigned. The present Lord Rothermere was also at the Ministry of Information—as Director of the News Division and Chief Press Adviser to the Minister. But he left after a week or so. Other names that occur to one are those of Sir Walter Monckton and Sir Kenneth Lee. It was not until Mr. Brendan Bracken appeared on the scene that the Ministry really took a turn for the better, and Mr. Cyril Radcliffe, K.C., became Director-General—a post he still occupies.

Considering that the British have never claimed to be any good at propaganda, the Ministry is a very fairly efficient machine, and has built up good contacts everywhere. It has ramifications in the Far East, with offices in Chungking and Delhi and Cairo, not to mention New York. It co-operates with the Dominions Governments and British Embassies. It has an office in Kuibyshev which is now producing a magazine of British news for the Soviet. In London it has contacts with the Allied Governments and the United States Army, Navy and Air Force. The United States are so satisfied with the services provided by the News Division of the M. of I. that they intend to use them rather than reproduce their own. This is a definite compliment from a publicity-minded country to one that has only learnt its lesson through travail.

You will all remember the loud laughter which greeted the figure of 999 as representing the number of employees at the Ministry of Information. Promises were made in the House of Commons to reduce this number. But naturally they could not be implemented. There are now over 2,000 employees. And when you consider the number of Departments necessary to counter Dr. Goebbels' gigantic propaganda machine (not to mention the Italians') the figure is by no means unreasonable.

The average person, if asked what was done at the Ministry of Information, would probably think in terms of news, censorship, advertisements, photographs and campaigns. But what about the Publications Division? Books already published include *The Battle of Britain, Bomber Command, The Defence of Calais, British Tanks, Income Tax Quiz, The Schools in Wartime* and *The "Ark Royal,"* all of which were publicised throughout the world by the News Division.

The Religions Division is organised into four sections: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Old Catholic and Jewish. Its job is to ensure that the spiritual issues at stake in the war are understood at home and abroad; to see that spiritual religious forces are brought into full play in the struggle; to remove, so far as is possible, wartime difficulties confronting the churches; to facilitate and widen the influence of the churches as factors in steadfastness; to make known overseas, especially in America, the unanimity with which British churches support the war and their reasons for doing so; to make use of religion in enemy-occupied countries as an invaluable link with, and ground of appeal to, large sections of the public. This applies also in part to Germany and Italy. Most of the activities of the Division, however, are directed overseas.

Publicity campaigns in the Home Division entail the distribution of millions of leaflets, the arranging of display centres and special film shows. Among the campaigns have been Dig for Victory, Scrap Metal Salvage, Quicker Turn-round, Billeting Evacuation, Post Early for Christmas and Road Safety.

The most important to publications like THE SPHERE is the Photographic Section, the head of which is Mr. H. Francis, O.B.E. Its job is to collect photographic material dealing with every aspect of the war at home and overseas, and provide for the widest possible distribution of such material throughout the world. Its stated policy is to assist and supplement existing Press and commercial photographic activities rather than to supplement them. For this reason the Division works in close collaboration with the principal photographic news agencies, and relies on their experience and organisation for its first line of service to the home and overseas Press. For the same reason it undertakes the actual taking of photographs where gaps exist which cannot be filled by normal commercial agencies. The majority of the official photographs are taken by photographers employed and controlled by the three Service Departments. The responsibility for the distribution of these photographs rests with the Ministry.

The Photographic Library, which has been built up by the Division from scratch, now contains over 250,000 photographs indexed and classified, showing the war effort. It will ultimately be handed over to the Imperial War Museum.

As to the vexed question of censorship, Rear-Admiral Thompson is Chief Press Censor, and a very popular one. General Tripp is the Naval Officer on Censorship; Group Captain Bradley and Major-General Lawson are his opposite numbers. Each has a staff of six officers who provide a twenty-four-hour service. If there is any knotty query which cannot be answered on the spot, it goes straight to the Service department concerned.

My own experience of censorship is literally voluminous, and I can say, without any attempt to curry favour, that the censors have been exceedingly considerate 99 times out of 100. I had a brush with one when I was a war correspondent in France, but that is all.

To sum up. The Ministry of Information is (in its own words) responsible for Press censorship and the issue of news and for the presentation of the national case, at home and in allied and neutral countries, by all the available means of publicity. It has taken over the functions of the Foreign Publicity Department of the Foreign Office, which was set up in June 1939, and also various powers exercised by the Postmaster-General in peace in relation to the B.B.C.

The most effective form of publicity overseas is a quick, cheap and reliable service of news from British sources. Consequently, the Ministry is closely concerned in the machinery for the supply and the distribution of British news overseas.

The main tasks of the Ministry in this field are:

1.—To facilitate the supply and distribution of British news.

2.—To ensure that all material favourable to the British case is given the fullest and widest possible publicity by all available channels.

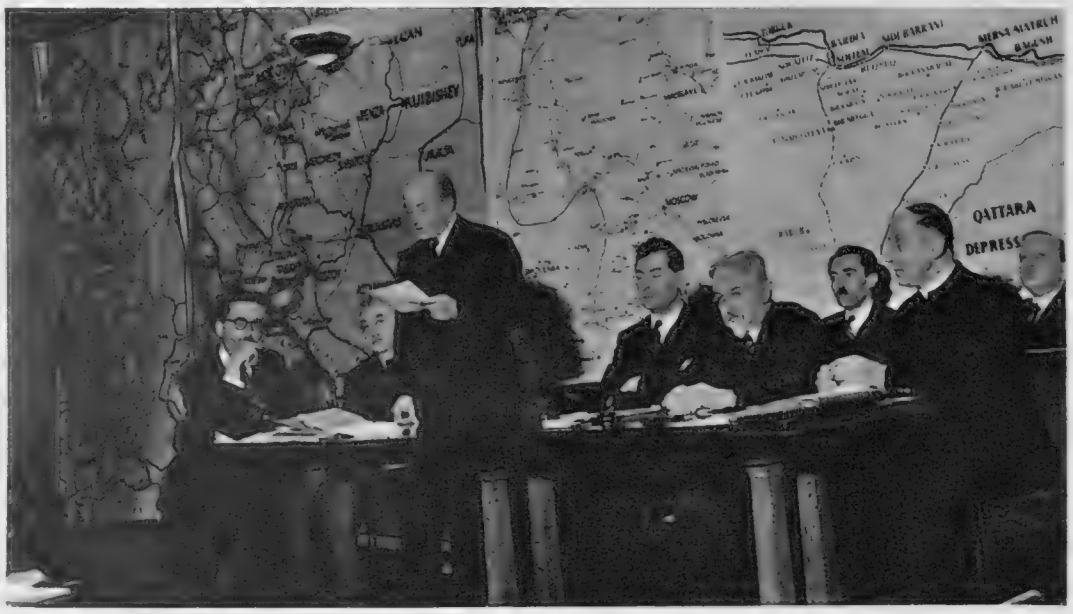
3.—To produce and to encourage the production of publicity in the form of films, photographs, newspaper articles, pamphlets, posters, broadcast talks, etc.

4.—To ensure that enemy misstatements are immediately and convincingly denied unless to do so would furnish information of value to the enemy.

5.—To collect the information necessary for the preparation of publicity material.

6.—To prevent the dissemination of information likely to be of assistance to the enemy in his war effort, and unlikely to reach him through other channels.

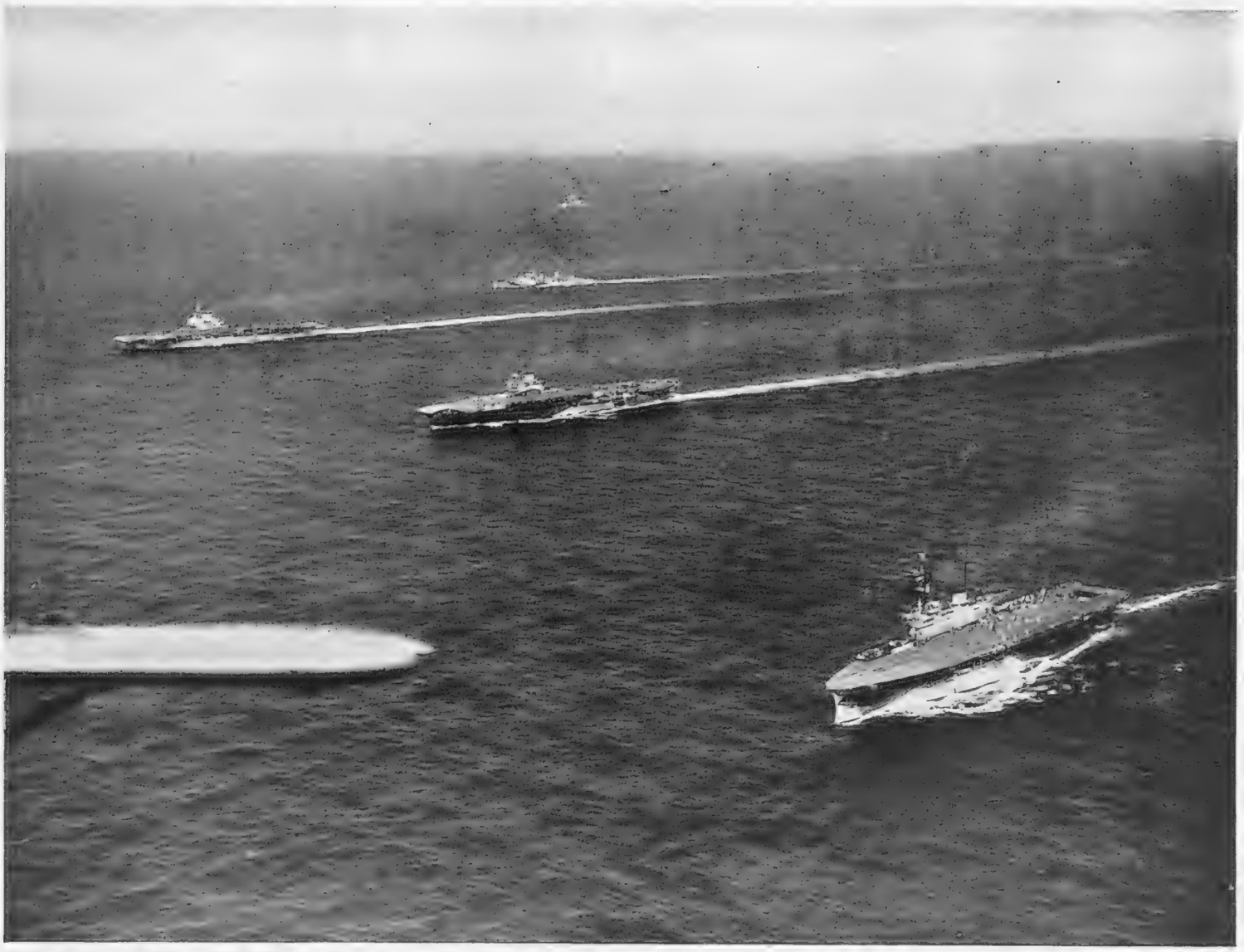
P.S.—It is significant that the News Division, which has consistently received praise for its efficiency, has always employed journalists to perform a journalist's job.



A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE M. of I. ON POLISH AFFAIRS

Addressing the assembled journalists from the platform (and backed by the large-scale maps which are a feature of the Conference Room) is Mr. S. Mikolajcsk, Polish Minister for Home Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister. On his right are Dr. Schwarcbart and Mr. W. Kulerski. On the Minister's left is Mr. J. H. Brebner, Director of the News Division at the Ministry of Information; Professor Stronski, the Polish Minister of Information; and Monsignore Kacsynski, Member of the Polish National Council. Behind are seated Mr. S. Zygielbebeym and Dr. Stefan Litauer

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export



SOME OF THE ESCORTING WARSHIPS which forced a way for the convoy to Malta in the face of heavy air and submarine attack in the Western Mediterranean: This picture, taken from the air, includes British cruisers and aircraft-carriers

The MALTA CONVOY

Official Pictures of the Fighting in the Sicilian Channel, when the Axis Air and Submarine Forces Attempted to Bar the Way to the George Cross Island

The whole operation of the Malta convoy was under the command of Vice-Admiral E. N. Syfret, who flew his flag in the battleship *Nelson*; the aircraft-carriers were commanded by Rear-Admiral A. L. St. G. Lyster (the Fifth Sea Lord); and the light forces and close escort by Rear-Admiral H. M. Burrough.

As is now known, H.M.S. *Eagle* was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat on the afternoon of Tuesday, August 11. During the remainder of that day attacks by U-boats were numerous, but no other ship was hit, although many counter-attacks were carried out by the screening destroyers, and one U-boat was destroyed by H.M.S. *Wolverine*.

Shortly before dark on August 11, an attack was made by enemy torpedo-carrying and dive-bombing aircraft. No ship was hit, but several of the enemy aircraft were destroyed. Throughout Wednesday, August 12, the enemy attacked continually with bombers, dive-bombers, torpedo-carrying and fighter aircraft, and with U-boats; and losses were suffered in the convoy. It is known that, by the evening of this day, 39 enemy aircraft were destroyed, 5 probably destroyed and 9 possibly destroyed by our carrier-borne naval aircraft, and that another U-boat had been destroyed by H.M.S. *Pathfinder* and H.M.S. *Ithuriel*.

The task of fighting the convoy through the Sicilian Channel to Malta in the final stage of the operation devolved upon Rear-Admiral Burrough's force, with such protection as could be provided by long-range R.A.F. fighters from Malta.

During the night of August 12-13 the enemy attacked with a large number of E-boats, at least two of which are known to have been sunk. The hazard to the convoy and its escort at this stage of

(*Continued on following pages*)

A NEAR MISS—BUT THE MERCHANT VESSEL UNDER ATTACK REACHED MALTA SAFELY. The official photographer who took the series of pictures reproduced here was on board H.M.S. "Manchester" when she was sunk. He was then transferred to a destroyer, with his camera and negatives intact

FIGHTER AND TORPEDO-BOMBERS ranged on the flight deck of an aircraft-carrier ready for action during the Battle of the Convoy

The MALTA CONVOY
(continued)

66 enemy aircraft were certainly destroyed. We lost 8 aircraft.

Unfortunately, in addition to the aircraft-carrier *Eagle* and the cruiser *Manchester*, the anti-aircraft cruiser *Cairo* and the destroyer *Foresight* were also sunk during the operation. H.M.S. *Cairo* was torpedoed by a U-boat and had to be sunk by our own forces, since towing was impracticable. *Foresight* was hit by a torpedo from an aircraft and damaged; she was taken in tow, but, after having been towed for over 12 hours, it became necessary to sink her. The four vessels named are stated by the Admiralty to represent the total losses among H.M. ships during this extensive operation.

It is not the intention of the Admiralty to divulge the number of ships in the convoy or the number of ships which arrived, as the extent of reinforcement which has been received by the fortress of Malta is obviously information of considerable importance to the enemy.

Naturally, in a hazardous operation of this kind some losses were suffered in the convoy, but that our loss and damage were not far greater was due to the cool and seamanlike handling of the merchant ships and warships, to the anti-aircraft gunfire, and to the tireless fighting spirit of the crews of the naval fighter aircraft, and to the co-operation of the R.A.F. fighters, bombers and reconnaissance aircraft.

(Continued from preceding page)

the passage was increased by the extensive mining carried out by the enemy, so that a channel had to be swept for the passage of the convoy and escort. It was at this stage that the cruiser *Manchester* was seriously damaged by a torpedo or mine. As already announced by the Admiralty, the ship subsequently sank, but the great majority of the ship's company is known to be safe.

Shortly after dawn on August 13, the enemy resumed the attack from the air; but at this stage the Royal Air Force, operating from Malta, were able to give increased fighter protection to the convoy. It has not yet been possible to compile the final total of enemy aircraft destroyed during this operation; but at least

THE SKY IS FILLED WITH THE BURSTS OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT SHELLS as the escorting vessels put up a barrage whilst the convoy steams on to Malta. All calibres of A.-A. shells were used

A GERMAN DIVE-BOMBER IN FLAMES: After having been shot down by gunfire from one of the British warships

NO TIME FOR A PROPER MEAL: A young signalman on board a destroyer eats a sandwich as he flashes out a signal

ON BOARD ONE OF THE ESCORTING WARSHIPS. The crew of a Bofors gun waiting for the Axis aircraft to reappear. The success of the gunners was a notable feature of the battle

A SALVO OF BOMBS FALLS HARMLESSLY between two of the merchant ships: and the convoy still plods on towards the Island!

THE CREW OF AN OERLIKON GUN, wearing anti-flash helmets, enjoy a cup of tea during a lull

THE CREW OF A DESTROYER'S MULTIPLE POM-POM enjoying a break during a lull in the action. The pile of empty cartridge-cases on the deck tells its own tale

IN THE MIDST OF THE MALTA PASSAGE ON BOARD A BRITISH WARSHIP: Ammunition and repair parties of a destroyer await further tasks. Note the shells on deck; and note also the lifebelts habitually worn by all members of the crew when in danger areas

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

A CLOSE SEASON for "CORRESPONDENTS"?

Washington and Dirty Linen, and Unity and Foreign Correspondents; The Money-Grubbing Vigour of the Victorians; Major Jarvis Laughs in Libya; Pearl Binder's Charming Russians

WHILE American history (revised version) is being taught in our schools and a large number of American young men in uniform are being taught that tea is tea, and not a round of drinks at five o'clock, it becomes more necessary than ever to remove certain misconceptions. That the Boston Tea Party, for instance, was more important than the Senate's refusal to ratify President Wilson's acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles. Or that war debts had any relation to the maintenance of a gold standard.

There is such a thing as being so close to an object that you can't see it properly, and living in one place for a long time can equally put one's mind out of focus. For all I know, Mr. Denys Smith may be aware that American isolationism, as such, caused little or no resentment in this country. The antics of the fallen idol, Charles Lindbergh, seemed to most people over here to be slightly embarrassing. It was rather as if our closest neighbours' favourite child had suddenly started to behave badly in public. That the rude words written on the fence might have been directed at us made it more embarrassing.

As for those famous characters, Ham Fish, Colonel McCormick, Senator Wheeler and the rest, I doubt whether one person in 10,000 would know who they are or what they had been up to. Mr. Denys Smith, who seems to have written **AMERICA AND THE AXIS WAR** (Cape. 15s.) for British consumption, has either been in Washington for so long that he does not know this, or else he does know it and thinks it is about time we were better informed about these gentlemen.

As the Comte d'Argental said on a famous occasion: "*Je n'en vois pas la nécessité.*"

Mr. Smith seems to forget that the most powerful of all isolationist speeches made since September 3, 1939, came unmistakably across the radio a few days after that date, and that the speaker was President Roosevelt. In other words, he not only misunderstands isolationism but, what is more important, the British attitude to it.

If this caustic shredding of these men and their motives had been made by, say, Mr. Herbert Agar, nobody would have been surprised—least of all the colonels and senators themselves—and nobody would have been upset. But ordinary common sense—which has been a demonstrably British quality in this war—argues that isolationism is a domestic issue in which all sides would resent, and justly resent, British interference or even comment.

Mr. Smith may retort, and perhaps with some justice, that his flaying of the isolationists is but a small part of a balanced survey of American foreign policy between 1919 and 1941. It is that, in fact, and it is also well written, well documented, careful, and displays considerable historical sense. Even so, it almost makes one shudder to see the number of old sores it probes. That it fails to reopen any of them will, I hope, be due to a healthy blending of indifference and common sense on both sides.

I am beginning to think that if the United Nations value their unity they should declare a moratorium on foreign correspondents.

The late Victorian age is presented in all its money-grubbing vigour in Mr. D. L. Murray's **ENTER THREE WITCHES** (Hodder and Stoughton. 9s. 6d.). The gaslights flicker over the squalors of Whitechapel, and burn suavely over the splendours of a South African millionaire's palace in Russell Square. For the purposes of this story, they are burning for the greater part of the time in Bloomsbury, and its country equivalent—if such a place can be imagined.

Sam Rubens, the Whitechapel boy, came back from Africa in the 90's with a considerable sum of money and complete confidence in his own talents for spending and replacing it. His marriage may have been fortuitous, but even that in its early days could have been regarded as a good investment. Josephine was beautiful and stately, and a better show-case for diamonds than inanimate velvet. Her background of Brighton side-streets was far more worthy than his own, and was to prove no deterrent to the careers of her two lovely sisters who became respectively an effective actress and a fashionable milliner.

Backed by Sam Rubens's money and by his passionate and, for this era, typical interest in the theatre, the first sister achieved fame and a singularly repellent little husband, whatever the author's sympathy with him, while the second sister is represented as the womanly type with very small feet and very big eyes who, by sheer integrity, achieved financial independence and a "county" husband.

Brandy and soda, and a surreptitious course of laudanum finally ruin Josephine's life; Violet, the actress, commits suicide under the threats of blackmail by which she is menaced; Sam loses all his money and finds himself back in Whitechapel, and only Rose, the pretty little bonnet-maker, survives with any expectation of a happy or moderately secure future.

THE WAR DEPICTED IN STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: In the church at Little Missenden, two stained-glass windows show scenes at Dunkirk during the present war. The windows were given to commemorate the completion of fifty years' ministry of the Rt. Rev. Philip Eliot in the County of Buckingham

There are no obvious subtleties in the plot, though one could count them by the hundred in the telling of the story. Algie, the shoddy blackmailer, is entirely without banality, and the guests at the rich, uncomfortable house-parties are drawn with the finest insight and an excellent satirical sense. As a picture, ornately gold-framed, of one aspect of an era this book is a remarkable success. Kimberley and the Rand were then pouring out their riches, and the Sam Rubenses of this world were there to collect it. They were the original rough diamonds.

Most of the pieces in Major C. S. Jarvis's **SCATTERED SHOTS** (John Murray. 7s. 6d.) are about shooting in what the *communiqués* now call the Middle East. It is interesting, for instance, to learn that "the oryx, that glorious beast with the long, rapier-like horns, has not been seen in the deserts of Egypt for over sixty years and, though there were a few addax in the vicinity of Sollum up till 1914, it is feared that the Army Light Cars wiped out the few survivors during the last war."

It is also interesting to know how the Egyptian nets quail, as well as the real facts about the "wild" pigeon-shooting of the Nile valley.

But they are all good stories, and some of them very funny, as, for instance, the one entitled "I Fear the Greeks." The one about the trek to a monastery on one of the big peaks in Sinai, entailing a 5,000-ft. climb after ibex, and the episode of the monastery gun are well worth rereading. So, too, are the tales of shooting at home, in which "Who Killed the Colonel?" vies with "Careful Camouflage" for a really good laugh. This light-hearted wisdom is illustrated by the inimitable Roly.

Miss Pearl Binder lived in Russia on and off for three years before the outbreak of our war against Hitler. She got about quite a lot from the Baltic to the Crimea, and in **RUSSIAN FAMILIES** (A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d.) she provides a charming and readable answer to the question "What are the Russian people really like?" There are an awful lot of Russians, of course, and Miss Binder has been lavish with her types, to whom she introduces us in an easy narrative and conversational style, and further entertains us by illustrating them at work and at play in her own individual manner. Personally, I found the Red Army soldier with the baby in his arms on the cover irresistible.

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THE NEW PLAYS REVIEWED

By PHILIP PAGE

FLARE PATH (Apollo).—Although there are very many theatregoers who consider, with some reason, that war should be kept out of the theatre, the flood of war-plays continues. In Mr. Terence Rattigan's play there is no actual tragedy. For a time we think there is, and there is some gloom and pathos until the airman who was thought to be missing turns up, dishevelled but cheery. This is a picture of life in a small hotel, with the R.A.F. and their womenfolk predominating, near a Lincolnshire airfield. Comedy is for the most part the tone, with a blonde barmaid's love for a gallant Pole, and an air-pilot's actress-wife still hankering after a *passé* film-actor, who was hanging around, as the romantic episodes. It is extraordinarily well acted, notably by Miss Adrianne Allen, Mr. Martin Walker and Mr. Gerard Hinze (as the Pole). I do not know why, in the final scene, they should have sung a Rabelaisian version of one of the late Herman Finck's Palace revue songs. It wasn't at all funny.

Escort (Lyric).—This is far grimmer stuff. A story of life aboard an armed merchant cruiser opened in more or less comic fashion, and I began to wonder why the Royal Navy was ever called "the Silent Service" when I heard that large group of young R.N. and R.N.V.R. officers pour out the spate of facetious chatter which Sir Patrick Hastings had provided for them. But soon we were in the thrills of a detective-drama, made even more thrilling by the fact that the ship was at sea—the whole stage was made to roll after the first interval (yes, it really *did* roll, if that is any comfort to refreshment-bar patrons)—with U-boats near. One of those young officers was a German spy, and Sir Patrick sketches the case against him with professional skill. Mr. John Stuart, Mr. Michael Shepley and a large all-male cast put in some first-rate work, and Mr. Basil Dean's production is brilliantly realistic.

Wild Rose (Princes).—Mr. Firth Shephard's latest musical show is most pleasantly and thoroughly "escapist." For it enables one to escape not only from war and all rumours of war, but also from the present said-to-be-civilised era. Here we are back forty years ago, when ladies wore big floppy hats and large feathers, and dresses which trailed gracefully along the ground. (How Mr. Shephard managed to provide lots and lots of these, Heaven knows.) If there are certain muddles and anachronisms—e.g., Gaby Deslys was not an exact contemporary of Lillian Russell—they matter hardly at all in view of the fact that here is grand acrobatic fooling by Mr. Richard Hearne, some dainty high-kicking by Miss Jessie Matthews, lovely girls wearing lovely frocks, tuneful music and fun of all sorts.

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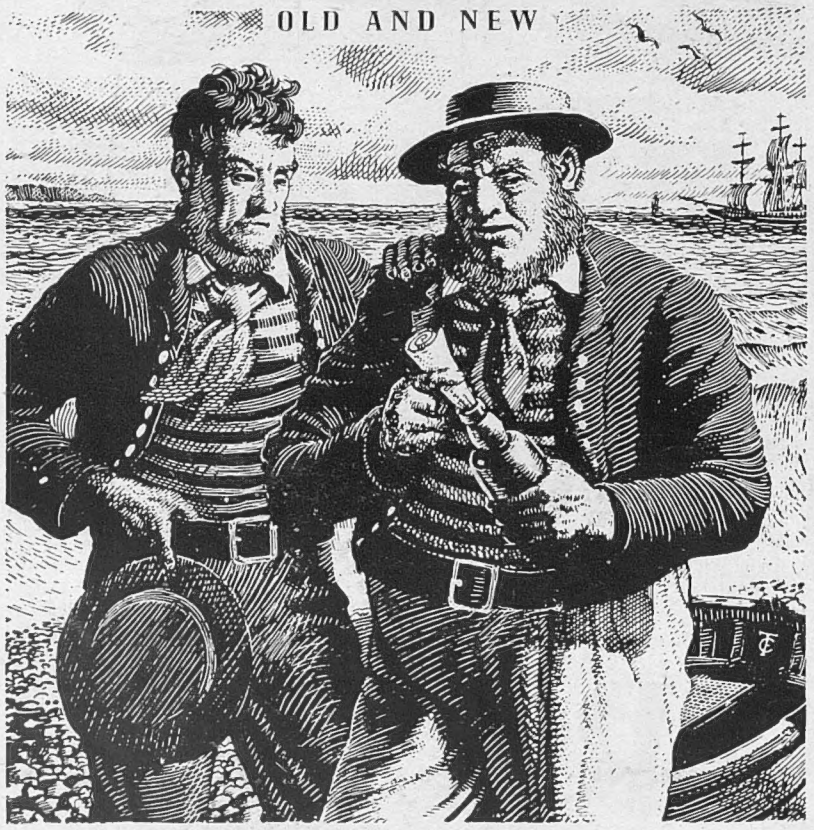

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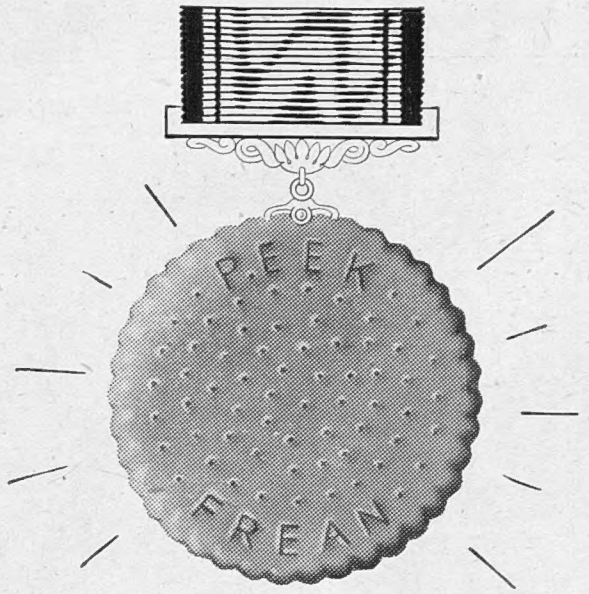

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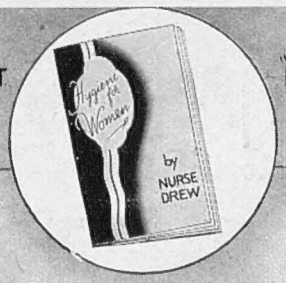

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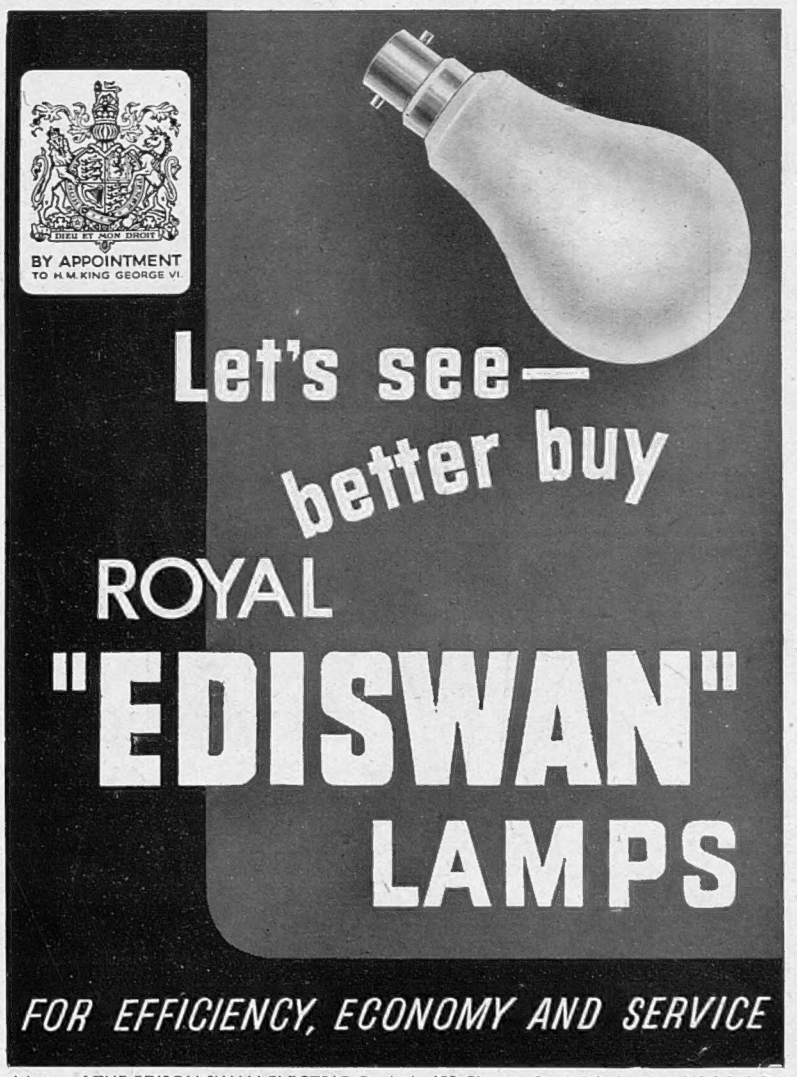

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